



# Town of Franklin

## Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) Budget Message

April 14, 2023

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## SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In compliance with Article Six, Sections 6-3-1 through 6-5-2 of the Franklin Town Charter, I am submitting the proposed FY24 Budget Message & Budget to the Town Council and Finance Committee.

I am presenting a balanced budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24). The Executive Summary explains the budget process, highlights, assumptions, and some general overview statistics and trends in the budget. Further below are detailed department budget narratives that speak about the mission and strategic initiatives within each department. Detailed budget line item numbers are in [Appendix A](#). Throughout the fiscal year (July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024), the staff will continue to update the budget model as new information becomes available. A budget review typically happens every November prior to setting the annual tax rate. Anyone can sign up for [Town Council agendas and legal notices here](#), which has the most up to date townwide budget actions and discussion in town. If residents seek deep dives into department or project finances, please visit the [Franklin Finance Committee meetings](#). The Finance Committee meets on a monthly basis to discuss and debate townwide financial issues at greater length. Please visit the [Town Budget page](#) and consult the website for the latest information. All budget meetings can be viewed on [YouTube](#), live and in archive, and Franklin TV.

The organization continues to perform at a very high level. The Town and Schools have tremendous services for the constituents we serve at a very good price. I encourage every person who reads this to reflect on their success: Very high graduation rates and college readiness, incredible school athletic achievements, superior special education services, and the vibrancy of school clubs and extracurricular activities. Franklin Police is now a fully accredited agency and the Fire Department is the 459th fire department out of 45,000 in the United States to reach an [ISO-1 rating](#). 200 acres of open space have been preserved in the last two years. The DPW continues to be a regional leader in rebuilding the Town's infrastructure. Recreation, Library and Senior Center programs have never been more popular as we continue to see record breaking numbers in customer demand. For the first time in the Town's history, we received a [AAA Bond Rating](#) last year. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, department operations have excelled throughout these past few years and have become even more efficient thanks to pandemic-related technology and operational changes!

Enough cannot be said for the dedication, commitment, passion, innovation, humility and teamwork the staff of this organization continues to showcase on a daily basis. The overall achievements in this organization have been tremendous. We should all be thankful and appreciative of what this team has achieved and the role the municipal and school staff play in the community. The future for the organization remains as bright as ever and the quality of life in Franklin is as exceptional as it has ever been.

**As I have documented in prior Fiscal Forecasts, inflation has now settled into the local budget.** While services in FY24 will remain very effective and we will not see any major reductions in service, it is worthy to note that inflation has made it challenging to make more substantial new strategic investments that the community is clearly asking for. Here are the assumptions being incorporated into the FY24 budget:

### Revenues Highlights

- The proposed FY24 budget does not include any revenues from the **Budget Stabilization "Rainy Day" Fund**. The fund currently has a balance of \$3,004,525. These reserves set the town up to be prepared in the event of an emergency, but equally as important, these reserves show bond rating agencies and financial institutions good financial policy and execution. Strong financial annual audits,

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

an effective OPEB policy, voter approved Community Preservation Act, a stormwater utility and increasing emergency reserves put the town in a greater position to maintain a stable AAA bond rating and quell interest rates in an era of record high inflation. It is important for the Town to continue to maintain and grow the Rainy Day fund rather than deplete it.

- The **Property Tax Levy** and “**New Growth**” revenue forecast will increase a cumulative \$3,451,693 in new property tax revenue from FY23. Traditionally, the Town has used a ten-year average model for the new growth figure. For FY24 this will be \$1,270,305. However, the town’s New Growth has plateaued. Depending on the overall national economy, this number could be challenging to achieve. There are clearly uncertain economic factors in the world’s economy relative to commercial development, housing construction and residential home improvements, all of which have been affected the last two years and we expect this to continue. Over the past year, the staff have seen a downturn in planning board and conservation commission applications for larger developments as the market continues to settle itself from the pandemic years. The town Planning Board even recently canceled a meeting due to a lack of business. New Growth assumptions will be revisited in November prior to the tax rate hearing as we have done in previous years.
- **State Aid** is assumed at the Governor’s FY24 budget levels. As it currently stands, the town stands to realize a net loss of \$9,667 in local aid from FY23. The House of Representatives and the State Senate have historically increased local aid and ended up with a higher figure than the Governor’s proposed budget. The Town readjusts for the final state budget in November. That said, as staff, stakeholders, and elected officials have discussed for many years, state aid is likely not to increase at a substantial amount.
- The Town’s **Local Receipts** look to rebound to pre-pandemic numbers, while also recognizing that hotel tax revenue and cannabis excise sales taxes are both now in this revenue category. Staff assume an additional \$2,000,000 in local receipts. The Town should see a rebounded stream of revenues for town service permits, hotel excise, meals excise and motor vehicle excise taxes. Hotel occupancies in town are bouncing back and a fourth hotel is scheduled to open this year. Additionally, FY24 should see the first full year with the 3% local option cannabis sales tax on recreational products. A reminder that most of this revenue source is fee-for-serve and reflects fees collected to perform services (e.g. licensing, building permits, ambulance receipts, recreation fees). Motor vehicle excise tax is slightly less than half of the revenue. [To see FY 2024 assumptions, see below.](#)

### Expenditures Highlights

- The Franklin Public School District will see an increase of \$1,031,954 over FY23. Further analysis in the Future Trends section below.
- The largest increase from FY23 to FY24 is in the Facilities budget. Due to inflation and global markets, electricity, gas and other utilities have increased substantially. Materials and supplies have also significantly increased over the past two years. Facilities expenses have risen \$760,000 over FY23. As nearly 80% of our facility footprint is school buildings and fields, most of this increase is to pay for facility maintenance in our schools. Between Facilities and DPW, the inflation-spurred cost increases with utilities, fuel, diesel, parts, supplies and contractors will see an increase well over \$1 million from FY23. Just these costs alone represent approximately 1/3 of all new revenue. I cannot emphasize enough how these increases are dramatically affecting the school budget the most.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- The budget includes a 2.5% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for all municipal personnel, including collective bargaining agreement commitments. School salaries are located in the school budget.
- Municipal employee pension costs will absorb almost \$320,000 in new revenue for the municipal departments (and some non-teacher school employees). These numbers do not include the School Department portion of health insurance, which is included in the school budget.
- Debt is still low relative to past years as a percentage of the overall town budget. The FY24 budget shows that 1.77% of the recurring general fund revenue is debt and interest. This percentage is half of the town goal of 3.5%. When capital projects for school and town facilities and infrastructure are on the books, the town can expect fewer dollars to be spent on other operating budget priorities. The proposed budget decreases \$374,202 in non-excluded debt and interest as two significant projects, (\$4.8 million Municipal Offices (Town/School Admin) and \$1.3 million School Remodeling) will be coming off the books.

The Debt and Interest budget remains one of my largest budgetary concerns for the future. At 1.77% of recurring general fund revenues, this slice of the budget is far below [town finance policy](#) and it has been trending in the wrong direction for years due to previous borrowing costs coming off the schedule and high interest rates to quell inflation. It should increase through the rest of the decade to maintain our public schools and facilities.

Other capital facilities or infrastructure projects are not included in the FY24 budget, but in FY25 the town may look at further borrowing to maintain school and town facilities. With a decent interest rate for the Schmidt Farm borrowing last December, we are cautiously optimistic that the Town will look at further borrowing for the backlog of projects in the pipeline: the Remington-Jefferson rehabilitation, the High School ten-year update, Washington Street to Grove Street sidewalk, King Street Memorial Park renovation (through CPA); Beaver Street Recycling Center and Solid Waste Master Plan and the Police Station. If the town desires any public reuse of Davis-Thayer, then those costs could be incurred in this area.

If the town borrows to do any of these projects in the future, debt and interest will rise and leave fewer dollars available for other areas. While these projects are critical, it is important to recognize that there will be an impact on the operational budget when the Town borrows to fund these capital projects as Debt and Interest will increase accordingly.

- The FY24 preliminary budget *reduces* the Department of Public Works budget by approximately \$1,034,117 in stormwater costs. These expenses will move to the Stormwater Utility Enterprise Fund (see Enterprise Fund details below).

The FY24 budget assumes that \$600,000 is now in the permanent tax base that will go toward roads maintenance and construction. This is the most roadwork money the Town has ever dedicated into the tax base and represents a commitment to maintaining and improving our roadway infrastructure!

Additionally, the budget assumes an additional \$416,000 will go toward Snow and Ice Removal. If approved, I expect the DPW will not need any further capital appropriation toward snow and ice, which

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

will free up about \$750,000 in annual capital funding for town and school capital projects. My FY24 budget reflects the accurate 10-year average cost of snow and ice.

The DPW also is seeing a large increase in fuel costs. The FY24 budget estimates an increase of \$150,000 +/- over FY23 for fuel, which is used for all town and school fleet (sans the school buses).

See the narrative on the proposed changes in the [DPW narrative](#) below.

- The FY24 budget includes a ¾ year assessment of regional dispatch at about \$959,000. Assuming the district receives the state 911 Grant, the final amount in the budget reflects the 25% reduction of the final assessment. The grant program will end this year. In FY25 the Town will be responsible for the full assessment at approximately \$1.4 million. The Town has established a MECC Stabilization account, which has deposited savings from the MECC into this account to ensure that the Town has the resources when the full MECC assessment comes back on the Town's books in FY25.
- New municipal positions in operating budget or public works utility budgets:
  - A Deputy Town Administrator in the Administrator's Office;
  - Two (2) additional Payroll and/or Human Resources staff to support both town and schools finance functions. Both the Town and Schools have traditionally understaffed the Central Office and Town Administration and Finance staff. Town and School Finance and HR must begin a restructuring and operational analysis to develop better systems, better succession planning and a more streamlined set of administrative functions. The departments simply need more staff to keep up with the increase in strategic and administrative work.
  - Four (4) additional Police officers will be invested in to help traffic enforcement, mental health related calls and the overall increase in calls for service throughout the community. These investments will also reduce overtime costs in FY25 and beyond to help offset the new salaries. Furthermore, the number one challenge in recruiting and retaining police officers is "forced overtime." The policy will help alleviate the need for forced overtime, which is one of the biggest concerns we heard from our officers during collective bargaining. Read the [Police Department narrative](#) for more analysis.
  - Two (2) additional paramedics for the EMS unit to support the record breaking volume of calls for service. The situation mirrors the PD above and the Fire Department offsets these costs with ambulance revenue.
  - Transition the part-time Historical Museum Archivist to full-time. There is simply too much work to be done for a part-time staff person and recruitment is exceptionally challenging for a specialized position such as this. Full-time is the only way the Town will maintain any consistency at this position.
  - A full-time Director of Public Art and Cultural Initiatives. In FY24 this will be a full time salary and position for half-year beginning in January 2024.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- A Van Driver and Administrative Assistant at the Senior Center to assist the coordinators of social services, programs and activities and transportation of the new van. The van will also assist those most in need of medical visits and appointments. These positions are also half-year beginning in January 2024. We will also convert the part-time Supportive Day Program Assistant to full-time to provide more continuity in our program for people with dementia.
- A Fleet Manager in Public Works to manage the nearly 200 pieces of apparatus the Town owns, including rental equipment, generators, and school trucks and vans. The DPW Director has advocated for nearly two decades for this position. The town fleet has now grown to a point where this position is absolutely critical. As the Town also continues to transition to a green fleet, additional expertise and strategic planning will be required.
- Investment in approximately \$130,000 of annual capital appropriations to Police and Fire for protective gear as I was asked to do by the Capital Subcommittee.
- Funds employee health care at a 5.2% increase or \$332,000. This maintains current plan design and HSA contributions.

### Future Trends

Municipal and School departments have been doing a great job managing their budgets, investing in value added services and adapting to citizen feedback and a changing world. Moving forward into FY24 and the following fiscal years, we see a handful of issues to monitor, notably the cost increases to residents in the form of stormwater utility rates, sewer rates and other major capital investment in town:

- Sewer Rates will be required to be raised significantly to create the surety behind the loan for the Beaver Street Interceptor. 109 years ago someone paid for the original pipes that lasted generations. Now, the residents of Franklin will repay the debt for current and future generations of Franklinites. Regardless of the need, it's more money out of people's pockets at a time of high inflation. Town officials should be cognizant of this.
- Stormwater Utility costs. On July 1, 2023 the stormwater utility implementation will be a tremendous amount of work and will require a 1-3 year transition out of the operating budget and into the utility. The start of this process in FY24 will be exhausting and time consuming for Finance, HR and DPW.
- Tri-County Vocational new school construction authorization and likely associated debt exclusion votes could increase the amount people pay in taxes, albeit several years down the road.
- Inflation will be a factor as personnel wages, petroleum and costs are increasing across the board for materials, goods and services, which will increase town budgets especially for departments such as Facilities and Public Works. The competitive job market is also driving up costs for both the town and schools with recruitment and retention.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- Debt & Interest. See the narrative above and in the [department section](#) below.
- The finances of the Franklin Public School District continue to walk on thinner and thinner ice. For over a decade, the Franklin Public Schools have been balancing their budget on the backs of declining enrollment, while consistently avoiding bold and challenging decisions and kicking cans down the road. At the end of the day, the spending of the School District is far exceeding the enrollment based reductions being made. Inflation is now forcing very challenging choices as basic costs to the town are increasing at a larger rate than usual. It's unclear if the schools even anticipated inflation as a factor in FY24 and what could be compounded in FY25. The situation that is now arriving was preventable through effective coordination with town leaders, but the current School Committee continues to operate in a bubble and not work with town leaders on town finances. I highlight some additional informational points that relate to the fiscal challenges of the public schools and the cost drivers:
  - Out of District placement costs rose 14% statewide this year, or \$775,496 in direct costs to Franklin Public Schools. Traditionally, this has been 2-3%. Most districts are facing these cost increases statewide. The Legislature and Governor Healey have filed a supplemental budget in March 2023 that will fund approximately 10% of the 14% increase. The Schools will be relieved well over a half a million dollars in expenses to cover these costs that were not anticipated a month ago. Please thank our elected state leaders for their swift action on this item!
  - Personnel, recruitment, retention, retirements and collective bargaining costs are driving the costs of public education. Salaries make up about 78% of the entire school budget and benefits make up 10%. Thus, approximately 88% of the school budget relates to personnel. Thus, a 4% personnel cost increase (each year for 3 years) is only going to make the school budget become deeper in deficit in FY25 and FY26. School leaders have been aware of this dynamic.
  - School Revolving Funds were at \$7 million on 6/30/22. Approximately \$5.57 million of those funds are already accounted for in FY23. The District projects a balance of \$6.7 million in FY24.
  - Franklin is a “Hold Harmless” community in the eyes of state aid. Franklin currently receives \$13.7 million in excess (hold harmless) state aid and, thus, the Town is held harmless of a penalty due to the steep enrollment drop. This provision of state law has been the safety net. Franklin is the second highest “hold harmless” community, with only Boston at a larger amount. Some other districts with excess base aid: Mendon-Upton \$6.9M, Billerica \$5.9M, Mansfield \$5.8M, Pentucket Regional \$6.0M. Why is this important? If the state goes into a recession and needs to balance its budget, this is an area they may look at to equalize out over populated school districts versus ones with declining enrollment. The public needs to be aware of this risk.
  - In 2008, the school district enrollment was 6,464. The current school district enrollment is 4,711 students in the 2022-2023 school year. That is a 28% decline in student enrollment in 15 years. The School District is losing 100-150 students a year in district enrollment and this trend is expected throughout most of the rest of the decade. The School Committee is conducting a [redistricting analysis](#) and looking at future enrollment projections and facilities needs. Factors to watch are birth rates, which are at historic lows, and greater school choice than it has ever

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

been. Options include the charter school, which is experiencing increased enrollment due to additional capacity, Tri-County Vocational High School, Norfolk Agricultural School, private and parochial school options, and homeschooling. Overall, there are too many educational options and too much facility in the marketplace for too few students.

- FPS is spending \$9.8 million more than what is required by Net School Spending (NSS) state requirements. NSS is the minimum amount a district must spend per student.
- Charter Schools. The Governor’s proposed budget increases the payments from the Public School District to the Charter School (presumably due to enrollment increases at the charter) by \$412,000 over FY23. In 2019, the Charter School Assessment was \$4.1 million, which was a sizable increase from the more consistent \$3.5-3.8 million per year through much of the mid-2010’s. FY24 shows almost \$6 million for the Town’s assessment. I expect FY25 will exceed \$6 million in annual payments to the charter school.
- In FY25, pandemic-related federal stimulus funds will be allocated or spent. The School District has had millions infused into their budget from federal stimulus money. These monies have helped transition Franklin through the last few years to maintain services. But soon those revenues will be gone and we will be on our own. The Town also contributed \$3 million in municipal received CARES Act money to purchase \$1 million in student ChromeBooks, funding for PPE during the pandemic, and retrofitted the entire school and town systems with state of the art UV technology for cleaner air in buildings. The Town Administrator also introduced an offer to use town ARPA funds for all school employees, teachers, retired teachers, nonunion staff, cafeteria workers, and administrative staff. The offer was rejected by school administration leadership and those revenues have now been reallocated for other purposes.
- Below is data from a chart in the Superintendent's FY24 budget presentation. As I have well documented every year, the annual request from the Schools has been greater than the entire allotment of new annual tax levy. In other words, the historical annual increase request is greater than the revenue the town estimates to take in! Note the percentage request is most often double the Proposition 2 ½ % the town is legally required to cap on property tax revenues.

Year	Superintendent’s Request	Town Council Allocation
2019	\$3M (4.98%)	\$3M
2020*	\$3.8M (6.07%)	\$1.26M
2021*	\$3.9M (6.03%)	\$800,000
2022	\$3M (4.61%)	\$2.25M
2023	\$2.4M (3.53%)	\$2.4M

\* denotes the two pandemic impacted budget years (does not include federal stimulus funds)

It is also important to note that “non-School” portions of the budget are made up of other school related costs

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

of approximately \$17-\$19 million. The “Municipal” budget pays for all school building debt & interest, property and casualty insurance, worker’s compensation, snow removal, non-teacher pension costs, grounds & building maintenance, utilities, fuel for the school van fleet, retired teacher health and life insurance, some staff, and many more. All of these costs are affected by inflation.

As the Town moves into FY24, the trends are depicting a lack of clarity and mixed messages on the future finances and vision of the District. I have concerns about the future financial strategy, or lack thereof, for the District due to the points made above. Similar to the City of Boston, which is seeing very similar enrollment decline and increasing costs and expectations, there are no easy answers. The School Committee and Superintendent of Schools have some challenging dynamics to solve.

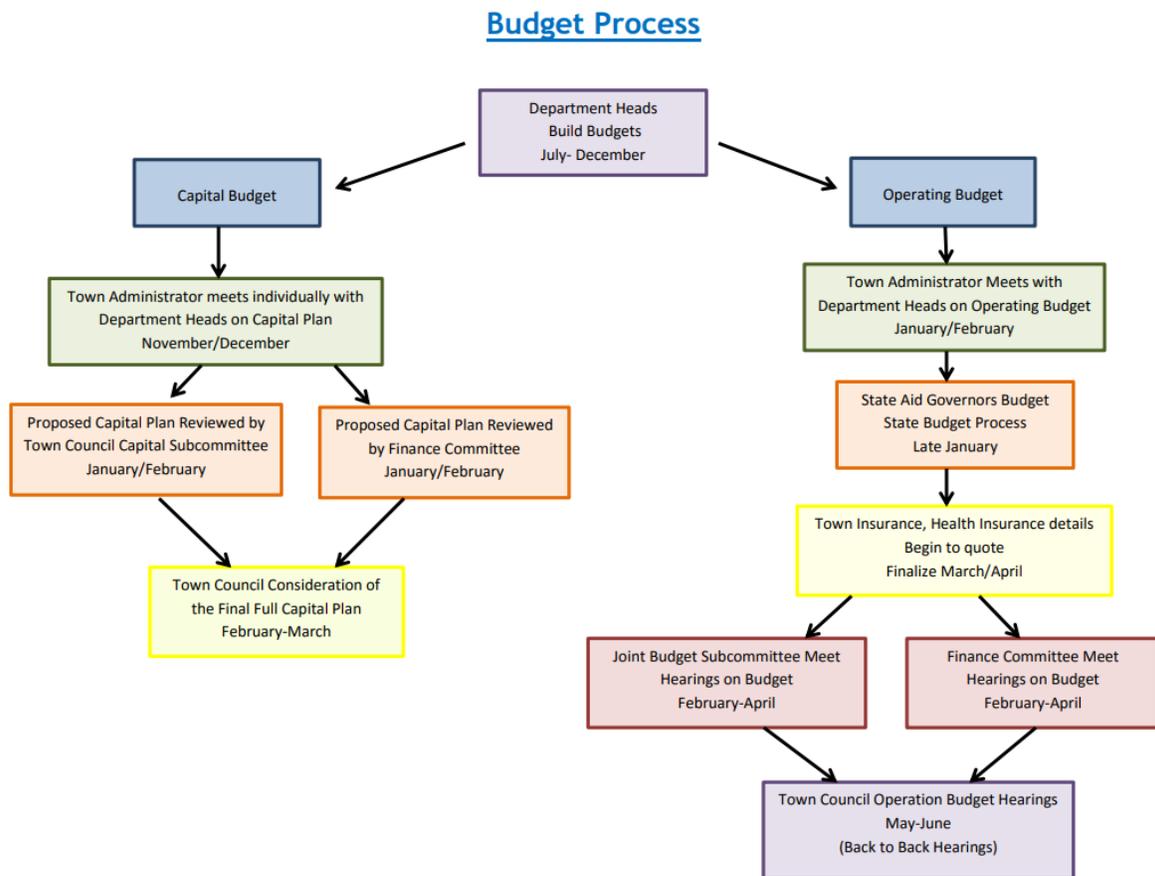
## Budget Basics & Process

### Annual Budget Process

The [Town Charter can be found here online](#) to read the legal requirements of the budget process.

Each department is required to submit a proposed budget to the Town Administrator by December 31st each year. The Town Finance Team, which includes the Town Administrator, Finance Director/Comptroller, Treasurer-Collector, Human Resources Director and Assistant to the Town Administrator, reviews each department budget requests with the departments throughout January and February.

Please see the following Budget Process FlowChart, which is a general guide to the process and helps illustrate in general terms the checks and balances and process.



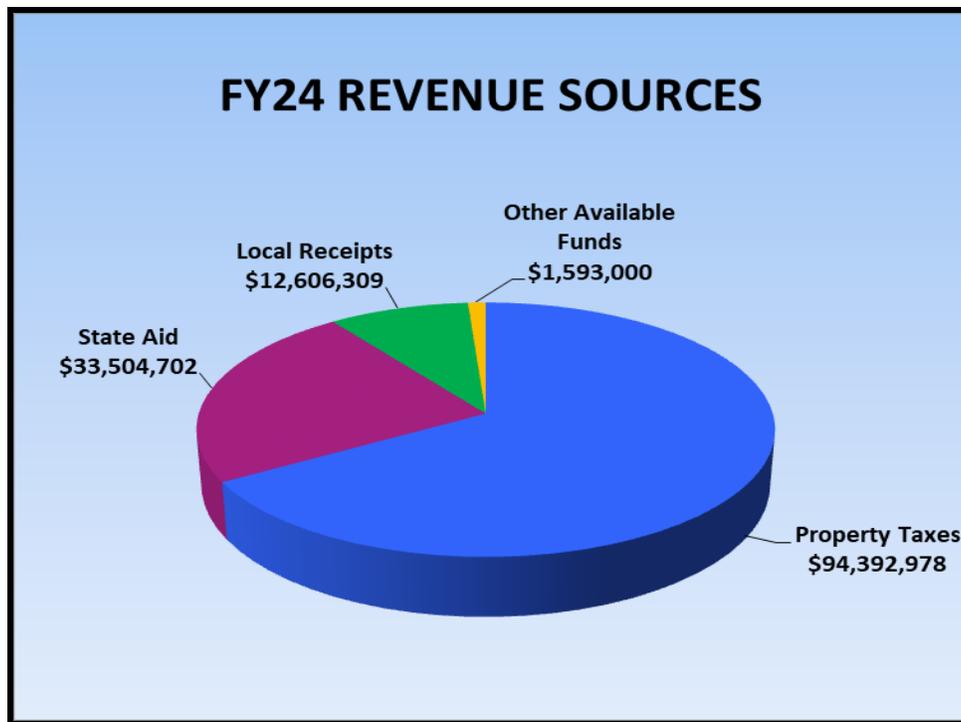
The Town Administrator reviews the highlights of the Town’s fiscal plan with the Budget subcommittee of the Town Council and the Joint Budget subcommittee, composed of members of the Town Council, Finance Committee and School Committee. Based on input and the meetings with the Department Heads, the Town Administrator makes a budget recommendation to the Town Council and the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee reviews the Town Administrator’s proposed budget and forwards their recommendations to the

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

Town Council. The Town Council holds two public hearings prior to adopting the budget. Those meetings are typically held prior to Memorial Day.

The vast majority of revenues collected by the Town are controlled by state law or by the annual appropriation of State Aid as well as local receipts, which are mostly fees for service (similar to School revolving funds). Fixed costs (health insurance, general insurance, energy, pensions, etc.) continue to increase and must be paid with limited growth in revenues. These forces all combine to place additional financial pressure on the overall municipal budget.

Revenue Source	Amount	% of Total
Property Tax	\$94,392,978	66.43%
State Aid	\$33,504,702	23.58%
Local Receipts	\$12,606,309	8.87%
Other Available Funds	\$1,593,000	1.12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$142,096,989</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



For more historical data, please visit the [Town Budget website](#).

### Property Taxes Overview

The primary source of revenue for Franklin is the property tax. Property taxes account for approximately 66% of revenues (excludes use of reserves and enterprise funds). State Aid accounts for approximately 24% and local receipts for approximately 9% of the overall revenues. The remaining 1% are other available funds.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

The Town’s Board of Assessors determines the value of all taxable real and personal property under guidelines established by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. For the purpose of taxation, real property includes: land, buildings, and improvements erected on/or affixed to land. Personal property includes: stock, inventory, furniture, fixtures, and machinery. The Assessors determine the full and fair market value every three years and update the values annually.

There are three major factors affecting real and personal property taxes:

1. Automatic 2.5% increase - Each year, a community’s levy limit can increase by 2.5% over the previous year’s tax levy limit. In FY24, the Town has an additional \$3,331,983 in new levy capacity.

Proposition 2 ½, passed by the voters in 1980, caps revenue growth to the largest portion of our revenues (property tax) to 2 ½% of the previous year’s tax levy plus new tax revenues from construction/improvements of buildings. For more details and links on Prop 2 ½ or other state finance issues, [visit our website for links in Other Resources](#).

2. New Growth - A community is able to increase its tax levy limit each year to reflect new growth in the tax base. Assessors are required to submit information on growth in the tax base for approval by the Department of Revenue as part of the Tax rate setting process. The staff uses a 10-year average to project new growth, unless unique factors give pause or confidence this source will be higher or lower each year.

<b>New Growth</b>				
<b>FY 2013 to FY 2024</b>				
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Amount</b>		<b>Fiscal Year</b>	
			<b>Amount</b>	
FY13	\$844,102		FY19	\$1,515,478
FY14	\$1,047,493		FY20	\$1,864,418
FY15	\$716,096		FY21	\$1,668,392
FY16	\$820,004		FY22	\$1,106,044
FY17	\$1,185,535		FY23	\$1,299,688
FY18	\$1,479,602		FY24	Est. \$1270305

3. Overrides/Debt Exclusions – A community can permanently increase its tax levy limit by approving an “operational override” of a certain dollar amount by approval of the voters at the ballot. “Debt Exclusions” are a temporary increase in a community’s levy limit for the life of the debt to pay for the project and then they “sunset” and the tax is relieved. These revenues show up on the Control Sheet in their own section. A few points:

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- a. Since Proposition 2 ½ began in 1980, the Town has had nine override proposals and all have failed except one in 2007.
- b. The voters have approved five debt exclusions to construct new schools since 1995.
- c. On the horizon, a renovated and expanded Police Station will be needed. A new Police Station would almost certainly require a debt exclusion. The Police Station Building Committee has been appointed and is set to begin their work in Summer 2023.
- d. On the immediate horizon is a potential debt exclusion vote to fund the Town's share of the proposed Tri-County Regional Vocational School's new facility construction, estimated to cost \$279 million.

### State Aid

Massachusetts General Law provides that the Commissioner of Revenue estimate the State's funding of local assistance programs authorized by law and appropriated annually by the legislature. State Aid line items are based on pre-established formulas, but the amount of funding is subject to annual review by the Governor and the Legislature. There are many different categories of state aid, local options, assessments or other state mandated services. The DOR combines these formulas into a "[Cherry Sheet](#)" for each municipality.

FY24 will be a more bumpy ride than the previous several fiscal years. The Town's FY24 budget assumes Governor Healey's budget model and assumes a \$9,667 net loss in local aid. The current revenue estimates (on which this budget is based) FY24 Chapter 70 Aid for education at \$29 million and non-school aid is about \$4.47 million including the Charter School reimbursement. The Charter School tuition reimbursement is \$1.12 million, and the assessment for the Charter School is almost \$6 million.

A recent history of local aid:

<u>FY24 Cherry Sheet Analysis</u>								
	Total	%	Dollar	Total	%	Total	%	Dollar
	State	Increase	Increase	State	Increase	Net State	Increase	Increase
	Revenue	(Decrease)	(Decrease)	Assessments	(Decrease)	Revenue	(Decrease)	(Decrease)
2014	30,423,967			4,889,668		25,534,299		
2015	30,599,714	0.58%	175,747	4,999,151	2.24%	25,600,563	0.26%	66,264.00
2016	30,641,751	0.14%	42,037	5,128,575	2.59%	25,513,176	-0.34%	(87,387.00)
2017	31,043,709	1.31%	401,958	5,009,105	-2.33%	26,034,604	2.04%	521,428.00
2018	31,384,347	1.10%	340,638	5,003,326	-0.12%	26,381,021	1.33%	346,417.00
2019	31,536,248	0.48%	151,901	4,951,856	-1.03%	26,584,392	0.77%	203,371.00
2020	32,358,580	2.61%	822,332	6,067,450	22.53%	26,291,130	-1.10%	(293,262.00)
2021	32,048,524	-0.96%	(310,056)	6,000,581	-1.10%	26,047,943	-0.92%	(243,187.00)
2022	32,035,104	-0.04%	(13,420)	6,074,892	1.24%	25,960,212	-0.34%	(87,731.00)
2023	33,134,171	3.43%	1,099,067	6,789,568	11.76%	26,344,603	1.48%	384,391.00
2024*	33,504,702	1.12%	370,531	7,169,766	5.60%	26,334,936	-0.04%	(9,667.00)

\* Governor's Budget

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

Local Receipts - See the chart below on FY24 Local Receipts assumptions:

<b>General Fund Revenue - Local Receipts</b>			
<b>Account</b>	<b>Estimated FY23</b>	<b>Estimated FY24</b>	<b>% Increase</b>
Motor Vehicle Excise Tax	4,626,500	5,463,827	18.11%
Meals Tax	548,366	647,675	18.11%
Hotel Tax	379,204	447,878	18.11%
Cannabis Excise Tax	89,521	105,733	18.11%
Penalties and Interest	259,042	305,955	18.11%
Payment in Lieu of Taxes	25,369	29,963	18.11%
Fees	2,201,112	2,599,733	18.11%
Rentals	238,281	281,434	18.11%
Departmental Revenue Recreation	516,958	610,579	18.11%
Cannabis Impact Fee/Special Assess.	335,295	-	-100.00%
Licenses and Permits	1,288,616	1,521,984	18.11%
Fines and Forfeits	57,565	67,990	18.11%
Investment Income	28,235	33,348	18.11%
Medicaid Reimbursement	339,220	400,653	18.11%
Miscellaneous Recurring	75,825	89,557	18.11%
	<b>11,009,109</b>	<b>12,606,309</b>	<b>14.51%</b>

For Local Receipts Historical data, please visit the [Town Budget website](#).

FY24 Projected Expenditures

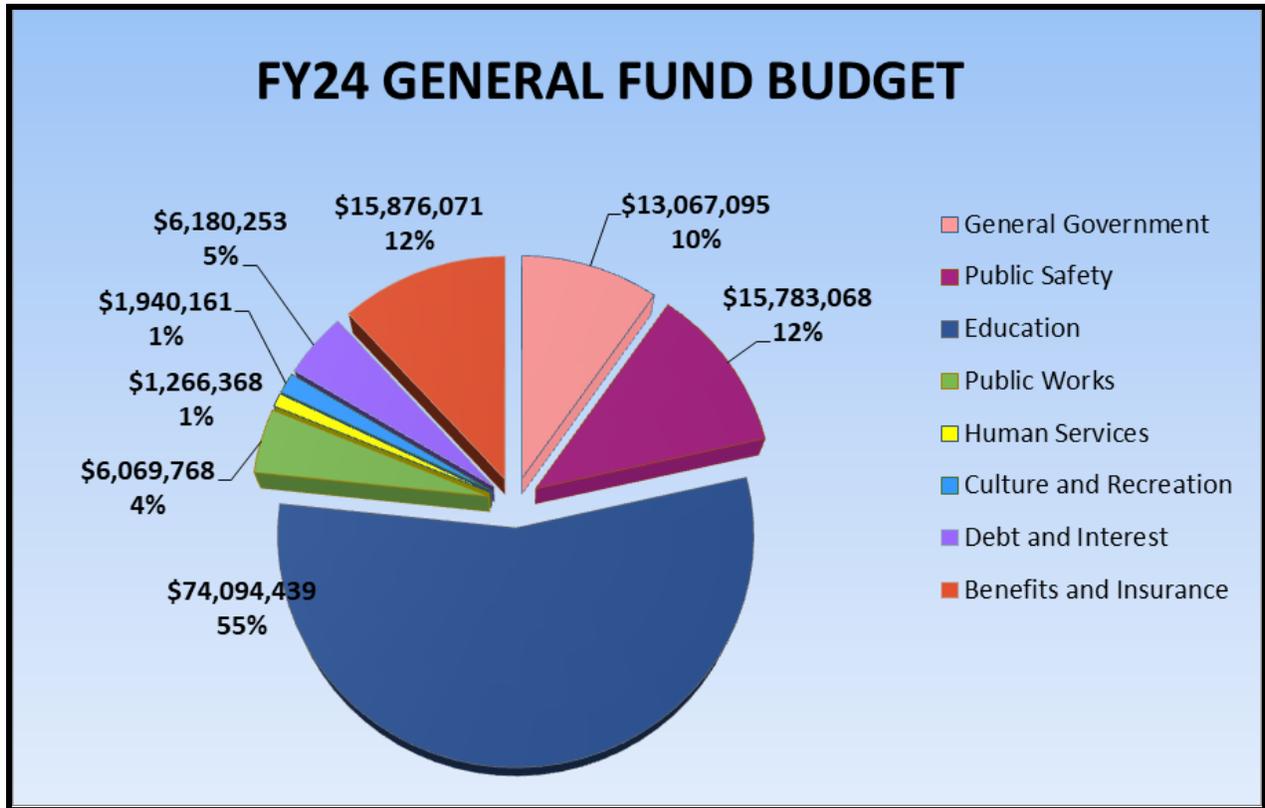
A Summary of increases to the major budget sections:

<b>Budget Category</b>	<b>Increase (Decrease)</b>
General Government	\$1,510,761
Franklin Public School District	\$1,031,954
Education (all public schools)	\$1,266,756
Public Safety	\$1,724,402
Department of Public Works	\$249,722
Human Services	\$206,268
Culture and Recreation	\$212,271
Debt and Interest	(\$493,911)
Benefits & Insurance	\$582,764

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

FY24 General Fund Budget Breakdown:

<u>Budget Category</u>	<u>Town Budget FY24</u>	<u>% of Total Budget</u>
General Government	\$13,067,095	9.73%
Public Safety	\$15,783,068	11.75%
Education	\$74,094,439	55.18%
Public Works	\$6,069,768	4.52%
Human Services	\$1,266,368	0.94%
Culture and Recreation	\$1,940,161	1.44%
Debt and Interest	\$6,180,253	4.60%
Benefits and Insurance	\$15,876,071	11.82%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$134,277,223</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



Health Insurance Trends

Personnel wages and benefits are almost two-thirds of the Town budget. The following chart show trends in expenditures for municipal employee health insurance:

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Employee Health Insurance Budget</b>	<b>Increase % over prior FY</b>
<b>2024</b>	\$3,853,000.00	9.43%
<b>2023</b>	\$3,520,825.00	.98%
<b>2022</b>	\$3,486,500.00	5.17%
<b>2021</b>	\$3,315,000.00	19.46%
<b>2020</b>	\$2,775,000.00	-3.48%
<b>2019</b>	\$2,875,000.00	4.55%
<b>2018</b>	\$2,750,000.00	5.36%
<b>2017</b>	\$2,610,000.00	4.40%
<b>2016</b>	\$2,500,000.00	1.50%
<b>2015</b>	\$2,463,000.00	5.48%

The Town continues to work through the Insurance Advisory Committee (IAC) to maintain current plan design, contain costs and stay on the cutting edge of healthcare for employees. This is very challenging, but the IAC has done a great job and is a great example of collaboration.

The most impactful policy change was the institution of the high deductible health plan (HDHP) in conjunction with a [Health Savings Account](#) (HSA) program which saves money on premiums. The Town established a HSA account for all employees on a high deductible health plan and contributes funds to these accounts. More details are in the HR and Benefits sections below.

Pension Trend

The following chart shows the Town's pension responsibility from Norfolk County for the past ten years. Since 2015 the Town's assessment has more than doubled in total dollars.

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Norfolk County Retirement Assessment</b>	<b>Increase % over prior FY</b>
<b>2024</b>	\$7,501,821.00	4.44%
<b>2023</b>	\$7,183,210.00	7.31%
<b>2022</b>	\$6,693,600.00	8.4%
<b>2021</b>	\$6,174,365.00	7.09%
<b>2020</b>	\$5,765,354.00	10.37%
<b>2019</b>	\$5,223,882.00	9.48%
<b>2018</b>	\$4,771,398.00	9.65%
<b>2017</b>	\$4,351,658.00	10.24%
<b>2016</b>	\$3,947,535.00	7.81%
<b>2015</b>	\$3,661,687.00	-0.02%

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

### Enterprise Accounts (Water, Sewer, Solid Waste, Stormwater)

These accounts are self-supporting by ratepayers and set up as enterprise accounts in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws. Changes to these budgets do not affect the general fund budget. If there are any unspent funds at the end of the fiscal year, they are automatically closed to their respective account's fund balance. The Town charges these accounts indirect costs that are transferred to the general fund to offset expenses paid for by the general fund. As described above in the Financial Policies, all utility funds that currently have an active fee, meet town policy for emergency use funds in those accounts.

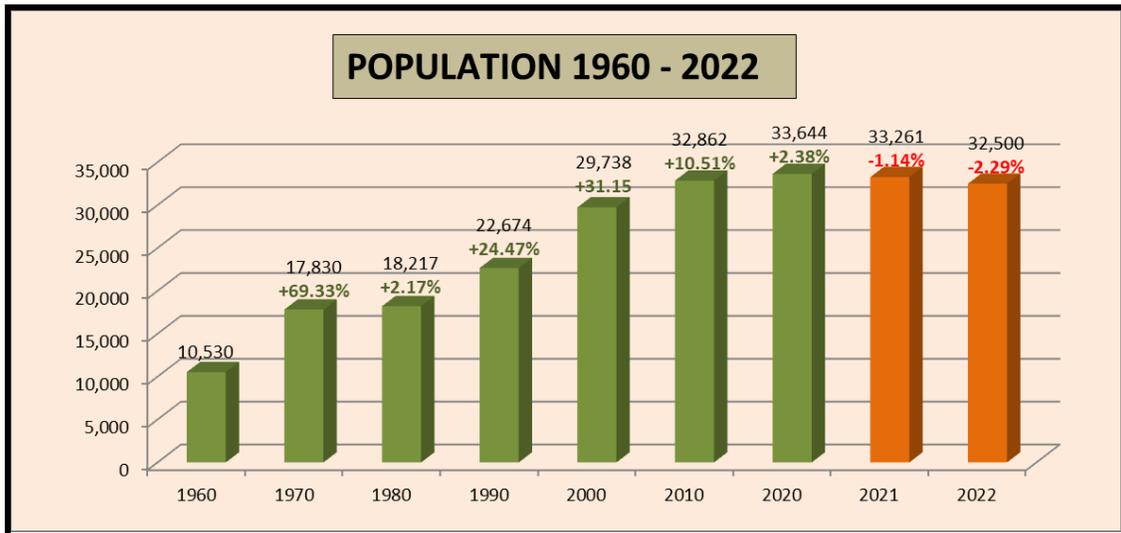
1. Water Enterprise Fund. The Town's water enterprise fund is very stable. Due to an infusion of ARPA funds, the Town has performed millions in new water line construction. The Department still has millions in borrowing authority, is on an established path to pay down for the new water treatment plant and the Town has a great staff. The biggest concern is inflation and we hope to stave off any new rate increases.
2. Sewer Enterprise Fund. Sewer rates will be considered as part of the budget process this year to begin to pay for the Beaver Street Interceptor project. Bids came in at approximately \$27 million. The project will be 4-5 years in length to replace the 109-year old sewer line that carries  $\frac{3}{4}$  of Franklin's sewage.
3. Refuse/Trash/Recycling. Global refuse and recycling markets will be the key factor to monitor in FY24 to ensure the fund is self sustainable.
4. Stormwater Utility. This is a new utility enterprise fund created as a part of the requirements in the new MS4 Permit. Effective July 1, 2023 a new utility fee will be charged to ratepayers. The Town has also established a Stormwater Division within the DPW Budget.

## Town Population & Demographics

Below is the most recent population data the town has from the Town Clerk’s Office or the federal census. Those interested in a very deep dive into the world of changing demographics and local precincts can see the Town Clerk’s October 20, 2021 dated [presentation](#) to the Town Council.

The population trends show a recent two year decline in town resident growth. Overall, the Town experienced significant growth in the decades from 1960 to 2010 (212%). In the decade from 2010 to 2020, the Town saw a leveling off of resident growth with only a slight increase in population of 2.38%. During the past two years, the population has slightly declined.

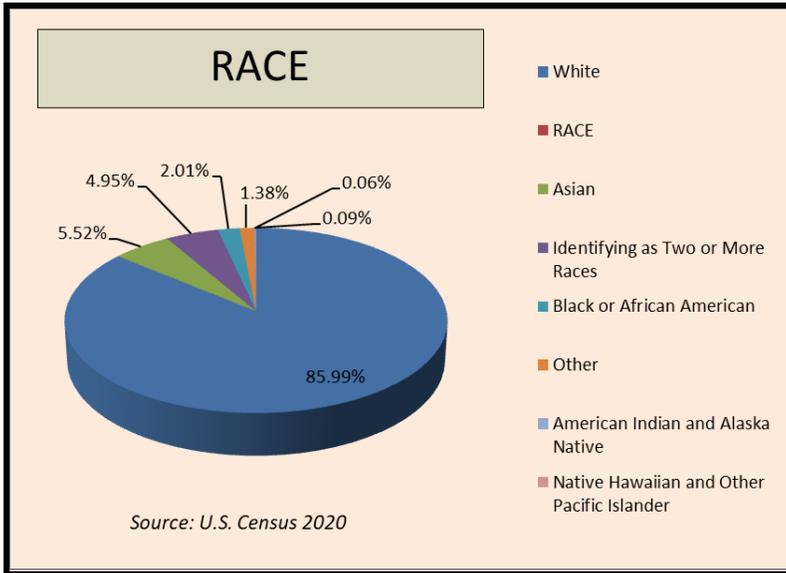
Year	Population	Change over prior shown period	% Change in Population
1960	10,530		
1970	17,830	7,300	69.33%
1980	18,217	387	2.17%
1990	22,674	4,457	24.47%
2000	29,738	7,064	31.15%
2010	32,862	3,124	10.51%
2020	33,644	782	2.38%
2021	33,261	-383	-1.14%
2022	32,500	-761	-2.29%



## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

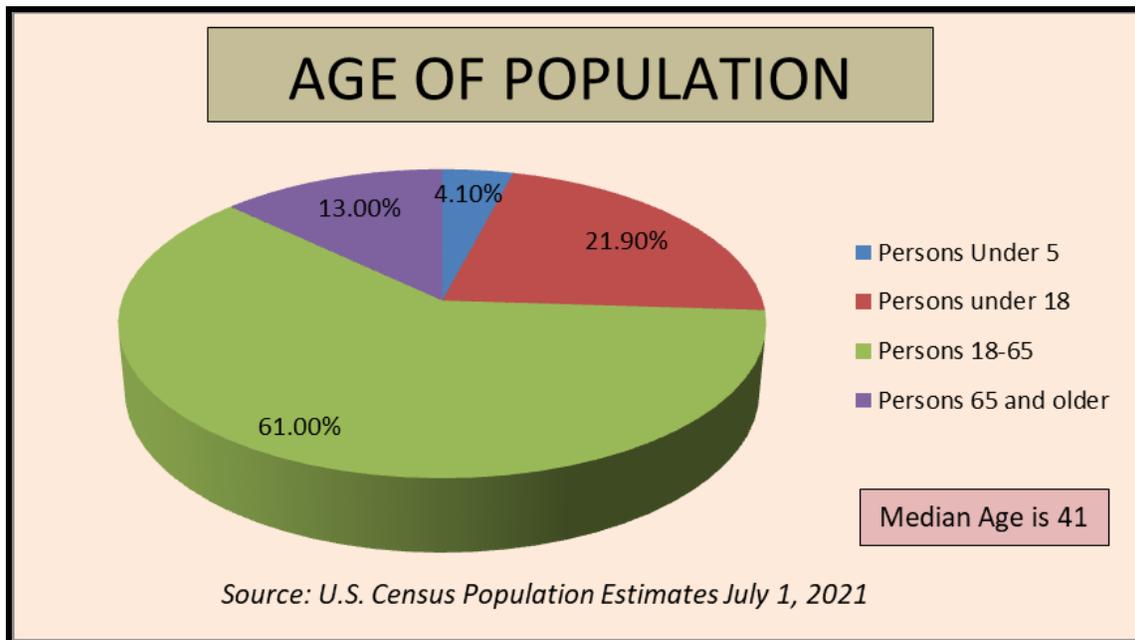
According to the 2021 ACS Five-Year Estimates, 54.7% of the population has a Bachelor's Degree or Higher, while 24.1% has a Graduate or Professional Degree. Comparatively, 46.6% of Massachusetts residents have a Bachelor's Degree or Higher, while 21.3% have a Graduate or Professional Degree.

The following information is based on the 2020 Federal Census (submitted in 2021).



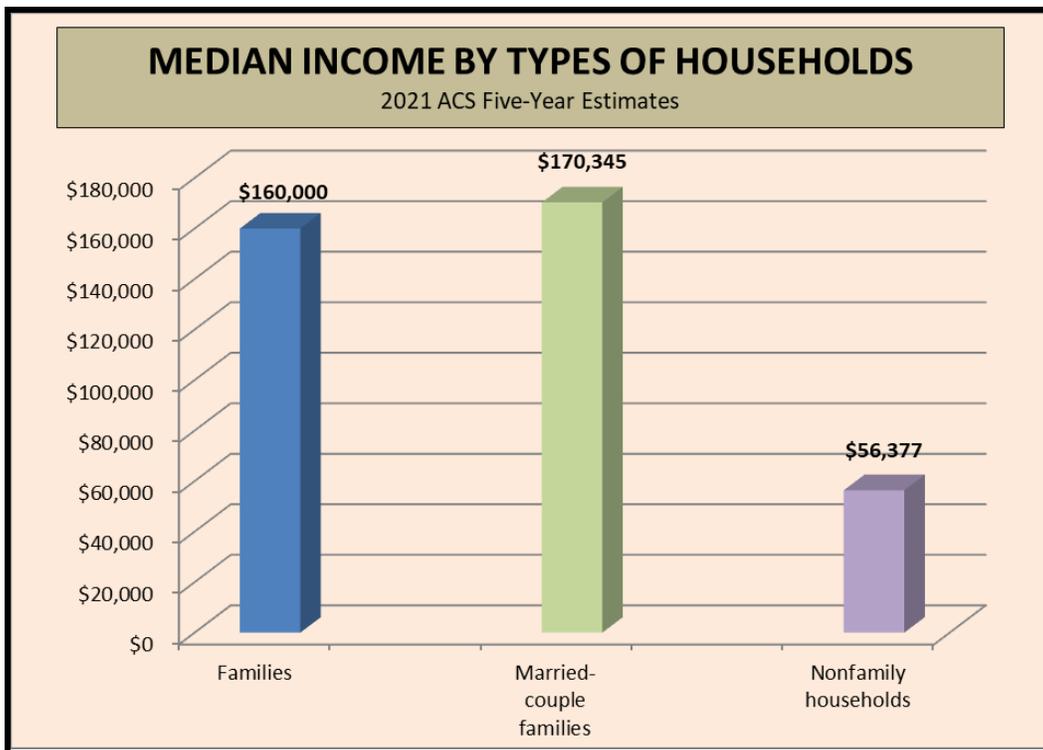
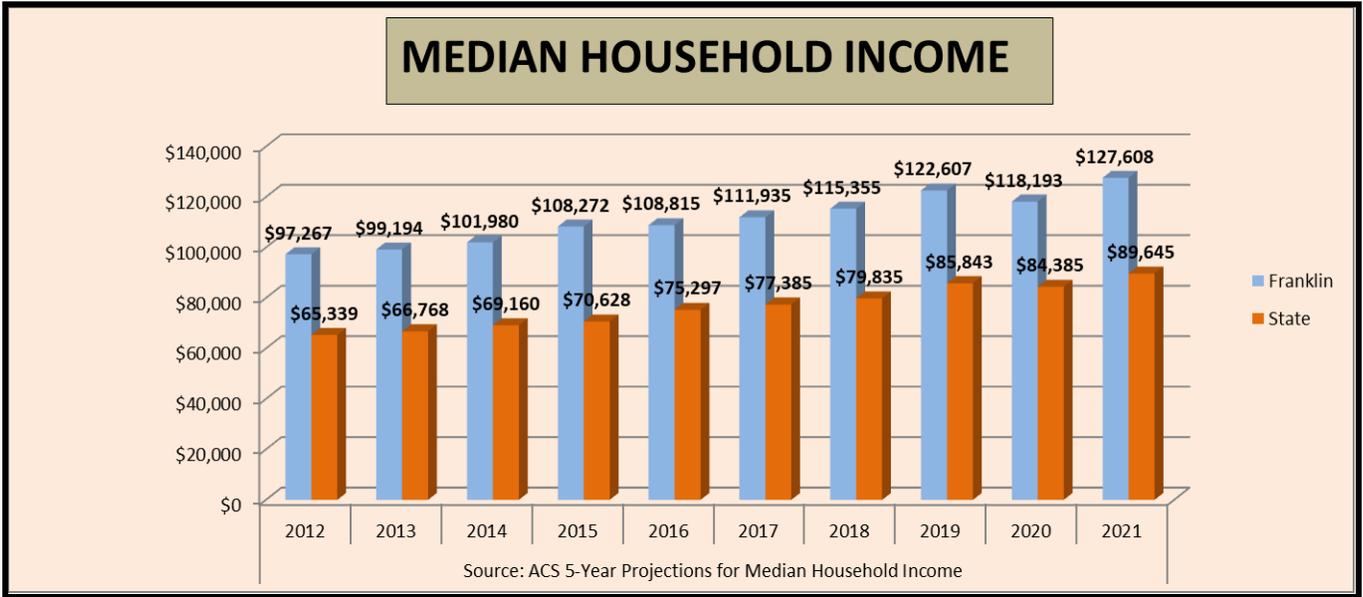
Race	Population
White	28,602
Black or African American	668
American Indian and Alaskan Native	29
Asian	1,837
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	19
Some Other Race	458
Identifying as 2+ Races	1,648
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>33,261</b>

3.7% of the population reported as Hispanic or Latino. Per the U.S. Census, Hispanics may be of any race, so also are included in applicable race categories.



**Median Household Income**

While the population growth leveled off and actually began to decline over the past decade, the Town’s Median Household Income has continued to rise. Franklin’s Median Household Income in 2021 of \$127,608 is 42.35% higher than the State’s Median Household Income. In fact, it is nearly 1.3 times the Median Household Income of the Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH Metro Area.



## **Acknowledgements**

The preparation of this budget would not be possible without the hard work of our Finance Director Chris Sandini, Treasurer-Collector Kerri Bertone, Human Resources Director Karen Bratt, Operations Assistant to the Town Administrator Julie McCann, Special Assistant to the Town Administrator Julie Jacobson and the cooperation of all the department heads and town employees. The preparation and work done to complete this budget is a TEAM effort.

I am very proud of all of our employees and sincerely hope the Town's citizens are as well. The Town's employees are dedicated in their personal lives and in many cases they donate their free time to make Franklin a great community to live and work. We can't solve all the problems, but each employee gives their all in an effort to provide the highest quality of life for the least amount of money. This fact was no more evident than over the past three years where every member of our team stepped up to do their part during the pandemic.

I continue to reflect on the quality of our town staff during the COVID-19 pandemic, in which both the town and schools are continuing to feel the post-pandemic challenges. We cannot thank the town and school staff enough for their tireless commitment, dedication and incredible creativity throughout the past year. The Town of Franklin is blessed to have the best municipal and school staff in the state. Few good words do justice explaining the tremendous passion and hard work the entire staff did over the past year. We were lucky to intimately witness their work on a day to day, hour to hour, basis. We can say with great certainty the Town of Franklin is a better organization than when the pandemic began.

Thank you to the Finance Committee for their role in the budget process. We always say they are the "citizen peer review" and perform a very important role. The more eyes and ears that participate in our government the stronger we become as a community. The Finance Committee hosts a "Deep Dives" series on town financial matters, departments, initiatives, laws and much more. If folks tuned into their 8-10 1-2 hour meetings a year, one would understand most of what the Town and School Departments do! Their meetings are [here](#).

Finally, on behalf of the town staff, I thank the Town Council for their continued support of the staff and community. These have not been easy times, but the Franklin Town Council has developed a framework for our government to succeed by consistently balancing support for schools, infrastructure, public safety, open space preservation, financial stability and proactive community development.

Jamie Hellen  
Town Administrator

# SECTION 2: DEPARTMENT NARRATIVES

## GENERAL GOVERNMENT

### TOWN COUNCIL

General Purpose/Mission Statement:

The Town Council, a nine member elected body, is the legislative and policy-making branch of Town government. The Council develops, adopts and enacts policies, resolutions and by-laws, which promote the general welfare of the Town. Meetings are held bi-monthly on Wednesday evenings in the Municipal Building at 355 East Central Street. The Town Council also holds public hearings and workshops on those issues that require Council deliberation and public input.

Check the Town of Franklin’s website at [www.franklinma.gov](http://www.franklinma.gov) for the most up to date schedule of meetings.

Folks can also sign up for emails with Town Council Agendas here: <http://www.franklinma.gov/subscribe>

Strategic Initiatives:

- The FY24 budget proposes to double the expenses for the Council budget to reflect an increase in MMA dues and to provide a small budget for training and conferences. As new members come aboard the Council, a couple thousands dollars is a good idea to allow for MMA Annual Meeting costs or other trainings members may want to attend.

DEPARTMENT: TOWN COUNCIL		FUNCTION: GENERAL GOVERNMENT			DEPT #: 111		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
EXPENSES	3,904	3,982	4,000	8,000	8,000	-	
<b>TOTAL TOWN COUNCIL :</b>	<b>\$3,904</b>	<b>\$3,982</b>	<b>\$4,000</b>	<b>\$8,000</b>	<b>\$8,000</b>	-	

### TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

General Purpose/Mission Statement:

The Town Administrator is the chief executive officer of the Town, and is responsible for the administration of the policies and programs approved by the Franklin Town Council and the implementation of the various sections of the Town Charter concerning management of the Town of Franklin. It is the responsibility of the Town Administrator to annually submit a balanced budget, capital improvement program, five year financial forecast, and other reports to the Town Council, per the Town Charter. This includes revenue projections, analyzing use of reserves for capital acquisitions and projects, and working closely with the School Administration to maintain a strong partnership.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

The Town Administrator is also responsible for negotiating and administering all collective bargaining agreements with employee organizations representing Town employees and participating in the deliberations of the school committee in collective bargaining pertaining to school employees.

### Staffing:

- 5 full-time employees
- 1 full-time Marketing and Communication Specialist (split cost with School Department)
- 1 part-time recording secretary (Town Council minutes)

### Strategic Initiatives:

- The FY24 budget proposes to add one new position to the office: a Deputy Town Administrator. It also proposes a Director of Public Art and Cultural Initiatives position at full-time, but funds the position starting mid fiscal year (January 1, 2024-ish).
- Staff reputation and culture remains very strong. The Town is very proud to continue to do what it takes to create a staff culture that is second to none. This takes a lot of work and careful decision-making.
- The Town negotiated 200 acres of open space protection in the past year.
- The Community Preservation Act (CPA) has been a big success with the open space protection, renovation of the Red Brick Schoolhouse, redevelopment of the Nason Street Tot Lot, investments in the Franklin Ridge Affordable Housing project and much more! The CPA will go down as one of the best decisions Franklin has ever made.
- The Town received a AAA bond rating for the first time in town history. This was validated a second time earlier this year and we expect to follow the advice of our financial team to maintain that rating.
- Municipal Aggregation. The Town accepted a low electric standard rate for all ratepayers at \$0.107 per KWH when the program began in November 2020 through November 2023. This rate helped residents stave off historic electricity rate increases. By June 2023 we will be able to show the millions of dollars saved by residents and businesses townwide this past winter. For more on municipal aggregation, visit the [Town website](#).
- Julie McCann co-chairs the Town's Safety Committee with the HR Director. The Safety Committee coordinates professional development training and workplace injury prevention. The Town maxed out its rewards again this year and will see approximately \$35,000 to \$40,000 off the Town's insurance.
- Julie McCann is the Town's new Licensing Administrator in charge of all licensing compliance.
- 2023 marks the Town's fifth year anniversary as a [Green Community!](#)

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

DEPARTMENT: TOWN ADMINISTRATOR		FUNCTION: GENERAL GOVERNMENT			DEPT #: 123		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	369,936	395,095	418,023	633,816	633,816	-	
EXPENSES	11,429	17,660	138,082	59,782	59,782	-	
<b>TOTAL TOWN ADMINISTRATOR :</b>	<b>\$381,364</b>	<b>\$412,755</b>	<b>\$556,105</b>	<b>\$693,598</b>	<b>\$693,598</b>	-	

### FINANCE COMMITTEE

#### General Purpose/Mission Statement:

A Finance Committee of 9 members is appointed by the Town Council for staggered 3-year terms. The Finance Committee elects from its membership for one-year terms of office a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, and a Clerk. The Town Finance Director/Comptroller and the Town Treasurer-Collector shall have ex-officio membership, without voting rights, on the Committee. All [Finance Committee meeting dates are here](#).

The Finance Committee carries out its duties in accordance with the provisions of general law, the Town Charter and bylaws, and has regular and free access and inspection rights to all books and accounts of any Town department or office. The Committee carefully examines all budget and appropriations proposals and issues its recommendations thereon prior to consideration, debate and vote by the Town Council. The duty of the Finance Committee is to recommend a balanced operating budget to the Town Council upon recommendation of the Town Administrator. The Finance Committee meets periodically to make recommendations upon all financial matters that are brought forward to the Town Council.

DEPARTMENT: FINANCE COMMITTEE		FUNCTION: GENERAL GOVERNMENT			DEPT #: 131		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
EXPENSES	360	345	1,500	1,500	1,500	-	
<b>TOTAL FINANCE COMMITTEE :</b>	<b>\$360</b>	<b>\$345</b>	<b>\$1,500</b>	<b>\$1,500</b>	<b>\$1,500</b>	-	

### OFFICE OF THE FINANCE DIRECTOR/COMPTROLLER

#### General Purpose/Mission Statement:

The responsibility of the Office of the Finance Director/Comptroller is to safeguard the financial assets of the town through the use of sound professional accounting practices and internal controls; to ensure that the financial integrity of the town is preserved and protected; to provide the Town's management with accurate and timely financial information and to provide controllership and audit functions for the town and its departments. The Department operates primarily under MGL Chapter 41 and 44 and the main duties are:

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- Financial Oversight – Provides financial oversight for all town transactions (receipts, expenditures, abatements, commitments), to include all municipal and school departments; responsible for maintaining the fixed asset and infrastructure for the General Fund and Enterprise Funds.
- Under its umbrella are the Offices of the Collector, Treasurer, Assessor, Comptroller, Procurement, Payroll and Accounts Payable.
- Financial Analysis and Reporting - Provides timely, accurate and informative reporting to departments, decision makers and the general public.
- Reconciliation of all funds – Reconciles General, Capital, Special Revenue, Trust & Agency, and Debt & Fixed Assets to include receivables and cash accounts. Assists in preparation of the Town's financial forecast. Maintains a computerized general ledger. Completes all statutory reporting requirements.
- Budget Preparation - Develops and assists in the presentation of the Town's budget. Records and monitors the Town's operating and capital budgets. Compiles the Town's budget books for the Finance Committee, Town Council and financial officials. Provides Town departments with monthly budget and encumbrance status reports.
- Accounts Payable/Payroll – Processes all payments for all Town invoices and administers the payroll functions. Reconciles all payroll withholdings to the monthly health, life, dental, and other insurance invoices. Provides deduction and health insurance information to Norfolk County Retirement Board.
- Purchasing – Has broad oversight over the procurement functions. The Purchasing Agent is responsible for the procurement of all goods and services. Operates under the applicable sections of MGL Chapter 41, Chapter 30, Chapter 149, Chapter 7C and Chapter 30B.
- Audit - Coordinates the Town's annual audit as required by Massachusetts General Law. Provides an audit firm with a comprehensive balance sheet and financial statements. Assists the Town Administrator in the development of the Management Discussion and Analysis section of the audit as required under GASB 34.

### Finance Department Staffing:

- 8 full-time employees (plus staff in other departments under the Finance Director)

### Strategic Initiatives:

- The FY24 budget proposes to increase the budget with two additional full-time staffers. The Comptroller's Office is currently undergoing an operational audit and it is believed that the addition of these two employees will be necessary in order to solve long standing operational issues.
- Reconcile all accounts receivable, cash, and trusts with the Treasurer-Collector.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

- Timely submittal of balance sheet, Free Cash certification, Schedule A, & Tax Recap.
- Successful completion of FY 2022 audit with no management letter or significant recommendations for improvement due to high performance.
- Achieved a AAA Bond Rating for the 1st time in the Town’s history, which will save the taxpayers’ money with lower interest rates.
- Successfully implemented all Affordable Care Act requirements.
- Completed an independent [Risk Assessment](#) in 2019 with few recommendations for improvement, including better documentation of internal protocols and policies with significant staff transitions due to retirements. All risk assessment tasks are complete.
- Developed internal controls and procedures manual for procurement and enhanced online procurement options.
- Replaced a retiring Payroll Clerk with a higher level Payroll Administrator and promoted the existing Payroll Administrator to Staff Accountant, providing the Department with a path to more streamlined and efficient operations.
- Oversaw a significant upgrade to the Town’s financial management software requiring 2 years of preparation and coordination with virtually every Town Department.
- Instituted an integrated cash management and reconciliation system that significantly reduced the amount of time needed to reconcile cash to the General Ledger.
- Currently enacting a new Stormwater Enterprise fund with the goal of a July 1st implementation date.
- Implemented the provisions of the Community Preservation Act as approved by a significant majority of Town voters.

TOWN OF FRANKLIN FY2024 BUDGET LEVEL REVIEW - DEPARTMENT SUMMARY						
DEPARTMENT: COMPTROLLER	FUNCTION: GENERAL GOVERNMENT			DEPT #: 135		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels		
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final
PERSONAL SERVICES	460,048	506,806	513,505	702,487	702,487	-
EXPENSES	62,440	69,311	81,300	85,800	85,800	-
<b>TOTAL COMPTROLLER :</b>	<b>\$522,488</b>	<b>\$576,117</b>	<b>\$594,805</b>	<b>\$788,287</b>	<b>\$788,287</b>	

## ASSESSORS DEPARTMENT

### General Purpose/Mission Statement:

The primary mission of the Board of Assessors and its professional and administrative staff is to prepare assessment roles for the taxation of real and personal property and motor vehicle excise. In order to assure that the tax levy is applied fairly and equitably at full and fair cash value, the inventory of all taxable property must be annually updated. Then through a market analysis, each parcel and account is appraised and classified according to use in order to apply the appropriate tax.

For Town of Franklin [Tax Rate history](#), please visit [the Board of Assessors website](#).

### Staffing:

- 4 full-time employees

### Strategic Initiatives:

- Successful timely tax rate setting, finalized the tax rate at \$12.58 per thousand dollars.
- Complete annually updating the inventory of real and personal property.
- Value and classify all real and personal property each year according to the optimum schedule based on our market analysis subject to approval by the MA DOR.
- Conduct research on the real estate market; sales ratio studies and investment property income & expense analysis.
- Identify “new growth” and report to the state for certification, along with valuation and tax rate reports for approval by DOR.
- To make location-based data readily available for Town Staff and the Public, continue to advocate use of unique Parcel ID’s in addition to the Town’s MAT accepted addresses. Encourage Town Staff to request datalinks in AxisGIS to enhance this “one-stop shopping” Central Database, thus improving research and decision-making for all.
- Process betterments, liens and apportionments. Prepare and certify lists of abutters.
- Maintain assessors’ maps, plans, property transfers and valuation records.
- Process all real and personal property tax commitments, abatements and exemptions.
- Generate motor vehicle and boat excise tax commitments and process abatements of the same as required.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

- Maintain and provide Public Records in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws.
- Upon use of a new system/application or increased use of an existing application, establish uniform standards of database building and ongoing maintenance. Examples:
  - 2002 - standards established for Patriot Real Estate administration & appraisal
  - 2003 - standards established for new Maps/GIS (aerials, deed & plan research)
  - 2006 - standards established for MUNIS Excise, Real & Personal Property Tax
  - 2016 - standards established for Records Archives, organization & retention

DEPARTMENT: BOARD OF ASSESSORS		FUNCTION: GENERAL GOVERNMENT			DEPT #: 141		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	320,807	327,628	348,004	368,198	368,198	-	
EXPENSES	87,692	95,627	99,900	104,900	104,900	-	
<b>TOTAL BOARD OF ASSESSORS :</b>	<b>\$408,499</b>	<b>\$423,255</b>	<b>\$447,904</b>	<b>\$473,098</b>	<b>\$473,098</b>	-	

**TREASURER/COLLECTOR**

**General Purpose/Mission Statement:**

The mission statement of the Treasurer-Collector's office is very simple. Provide the taxpayers and employees of the Town of Franklin with the highest level of professional and courteous service, maintain accurate records of all receipts and disbursements, invest town funds with a goal of SLY (safety, liquidity, and yield), maintain Standard and Poor's AAA credit rating the town currently has achieved, actively pursue delinquent taxes and maintain our already high collection rate.

**Collector's Core Functions:**

- Accept property tax commitments from the Assessors, have bills printed and mailed to all Franklin property owners (44,000 per year).
- Accept motor vehicle excise tax commitments from the Assessors, have bills printed and mailed to owners (35,000 per year).
- Accept water/sewer/trash commitments from the Department of Public Works, have bills printed and mailed to customers (40,000 per year).
- Issue demand (late) notices for above bills.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- Receive payment for all of the above bills. Currently 90% of the bills are processed through our lockbox, tax services and online bill pay through Unibank. The ten percent processed in our office are for cash transactions, late bills, partial payments, etc.
- During calendar year 2022 and early 2023, online bill pay through Unipay processed 35,519 payments for a total of \$14,967,160.
- Although we are using a lockbox service and online bill payment, we still have a large number of taxpayers/customers who pay in person, approximately 10,000 per year. Customer Service is a top priority and while the Town Hall was closed to the public, the office was able to be open utilizing our drive-up window.
- We take many telephone call inquiries from taxpayers, customers, mortgage companies, law firms as well as email requests, approximately 15,000 per year.
- Research and prepare municipal lien certificates A total of 772 processed this year with 78 requests received and processed using Viewpoint. In 2021, we implemented the ability to request a Municipal Lien Certificate (MLC) through Viewpoint.
- Research and prepare all betterment releases for recording at the registry of deeds.
- Research and prepare refund checks for real estate, personal property, motor vehicle taxes and utility overpayments.
- Prepare and deliver the warrant of unpaid excise taxes and personal property taxes to the Deputy Collector, Kelley & Ryan. Receive payments and turnover from the deputy collector and update accounts.

### Treasurer's Core Functions:

- Receive turnovers of receipts from all departments. This includes taxes, utility, charges, and fees. Some examples are school bus fees, inspection fees, liquor license fees, charges for dog licenses, fees for recreation programs, pistol permits, street opening permit fees, adult Ed fees, school program fees, etc.
- The School Department received and turned over approximately \$1,748,186 through Unipay during calendar 2022-2023.
- Receive all state and federal disbursements during the year.
- Maintain and reconcile 80 bank accounts. Move funds between accounts according to safety, yield and cash flow needs.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- Payroll and Vendor. Reporting and payment of payroll taxes to DOR and IRS, and distribution of payments by check, direct deposit, or wire to employees, various retirement plans and vendors. Report W-2 information to the Social Security Administration and 1099 and 1095 information to the IRS every year. Distribute W-2's, 1099's and 1095's every January.
- Notify taxpayers/customers of returned checks.
- Responsible for all debt beginning with preparing the official statement, bond sales, preparing the continuing disclosure statement, bond ratings, and payment of debt and interest.
- Responsible for managing and collecting on tax title accounts through letter writing to taxpayers, phone calls, notifying mortgage holders and ultimately foreclosure. Prepare instruments of redemption for recording at the registry of deeds and notices of final disposition.

### Staffing:

- 6 full-time employees

### Strategic Initiatives:

- In FY24, The Treasurer-Collector's Office will continue to take advantage of professional development opportunities to be educated on the threats of cybersecurity. The Treasurer-Collector will work collaboratively with the Finance Director and industry stakeholders to monitor trends in this criminal field to ensure the public's money is safe.
- The Treasurer-Collector has been appointed to the Massachusetts Collector Treasurer Association (MCTA) Education Committee.
- Tax Title Revolving Fund - Working to implement a Tax Title Revolving fund in order to pay for the costs associated while at the same time reducing the budget of the Treasurer-Collector. This initiative was completed in FY22.
- We continue to streamline in-house procedures eliminating much of our manual work by utilizing available technology. We began using a check scanner and we are utilizing that function for scanning in checks we receive from the department turnovers. We also have a check scanner for our Lockbox. This has eliminated the need to mail the payments to the lockbox company and has reduced the turnaround time when checks are deposited. This initiative was instrumental in our ability to process payments during COVID.
- Treasurer/Collector along with the Comptroller's office converted to integrated Munis Cash Management. Marina Malamud was instrumental in the success of the efficiency.
- We continue an aggressive collection program for past due tax title accounts. Results show 5 properties being redeemed through April of FY23, totaling \$104,265.22.
- We offer e-billing where taxpayers and utility customers have the option of receiving their bills by email. This also includes Motor Vehicle Excise Tax Bills. Unipaygold has added Text message alerts.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

- The Town is now promoting paperless billing. We currently have 512 residents enrolled in paperless billing. The Town also announced that they will absorb the ACH fee as a way to promote paying online and going paperless. The Town absorbs the ACH fee for all Town and School transactions.
- Created a process with our Lockbox Company to have the ability to process electronic checks. Electronic checks are generated when a citizen uses their on-line checking account to pay a bill.
- Continued education of all staff through MCTA staff school and annual school as well as Division of Local Services (DLS) Webinars.
- Employee expense reimbursements are now processed via direct deposit eliminating paper checks.
- Continue to invest the town’s monies in secure funds with the highest possible rate of return yet retain adequate liquidity. Confirmed that all bank accounts are FDIC insured and anything over \$250k are DIF or Collateralized.
- Place outstanding taxes from the prior fiscal year into tax title by the end of each May.
- Continue a yearly cycle of clearing up outstanding checks. We must locate the owners of uncashed checks through direct mail or advertising and reissue stale, dated or lost checks. Unclaimed funds will be handled according to Massachusetts General Law.

DEPARTMENT: TREASURER/COLLECTOR		FUNCTION: GENERAL GOVERNMENT			DEPT #: 147		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	317,248	383,222	408,656	442,959	442,959	-	
EXPENSES	80,381	86,422	91,105	91,105	91,105	-	
<b>TOTAL TREASURER/COLLECTOR :</b>	<b>\$397,628</b>	<b>\$469,644</b>	<b>\$499,761</b>	<b>\$534,064</b>	<b>\$534,064</b>	<b>-</b>	

**LEGAL**

**General Purpose/Mission Statement:**

The legal department is responsible for providing independent legal advice and for participating in the drafting and reviewing of all legal instruments. The Town Attorney represents the town on all legal matters, including litigation, contracts, drafting of Town bylaws and enforcement of the bylaws through the court system. The Town also engages special counsel for labor negotiations and other specialties as needed, such as solar.

**Staffing:**

- 1 part-time in house attorney

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

DEPARTMENT: LEGAL SERVICES		FUNCTION: GENERAL GOVERNMENT			DEPT #: 151		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	107,560	109,662	117,479	125,105	125,105	-	
EXPENSES	53,540	35,928	60,000	60,000	60,000	-	
<b>TOTAL LEGAL SERVICES :</b>	<b>\$161,100</b>	<b>\$145,590</b>	<b>\$177,479</b>	<b>\$185,105</b>	<b>\$185,105</b>	-	

### HUMAN RESOURCES

#### General Purpose/Mission Statement:

The department serves the Town of Franklin by matching the value of human capital (people and their skills) with Town initiatives, values, strategies and the needs of all citizens. The office provides high quality customer service to employees and citizens.

#### Staffing:

- 3 full-time employees

#### Strategic Initiatives:

- The Town budget added funding for a Benefits Coordinator in the FY23 budget. Unfortunately, we had a very busy year and weren't able to hire the position yet at the time of this report. We posted the position in September 2022 and again in March 2023. We plan to start interviews in May and hope to have the position filled in FY24.

The Benefits Coordinator will assist both the Town and School Human Resources Department in administering benefits for all Town and School employees. The Town offers a number of different voluntary benefits, which include:

- Health Insurance
  - Dental insurance
  - Life Insurance (Basic, Voluntary and a new Whole Life program)
  - Short Term and Long Term Disability
  - Deferred Compensation Plans (457b) through two different vendors
  - Tax-Sheltered Annuity plans (403b) for school employees through several different vendors
  - Health Savings Accounts (HSA)
  - Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) - for both medical and dependent care costs
- The Town ratified collective bargaining agreements for all seven bargaining units last fall and our current agreements are effective through June 30, 2025 (FY23-FY25). We had very positive negotiation sessions and are confident that we have agreements that are positive for both the Town and its employees.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

- We concluded our Compensation and Classification study in December 2022 and implemented a revised Compensation and Classification plan. This study will allow us to stay competitive in the job market and recruit and retain the top municipal employees in Massachusetts.
- The Town of Franklin joined the Massachusetts Strategic Health Group (MSHG) at the beginning of FY23. MSHG is a self-funded trust with about 7 other Massachusetts Towns. We expect quite a few additional Towns to join the group in FY24 (July 2023). Overall, we have had a very positive experience in moving from Harvard Pilgrim to our new third party administrator, Health Plans Inc. (HPI). There were a few bumps in the road early in the fiscal year, but everything has since settled down. Our employees are able to use both the Harvard Pilgrim network and the United network and still have access to all the same doctors and hospitals. However, our rates are much lower than they likely would have been if we stayed with Harvard Pilgrim.
- In FY24, our rates will increase by 4.25% for the High Deductible Plan and 6% for the EPO and PPO. While it is difficult to see any kind of rate increase, these percentages are slightly lower than the trend, which is around 6% to 8%. We are also pleased that we are keeping the same plan designs and are able to continue contributing to employees' Health Savings Accounts in FY24. Please see the Benefits section of this document for additional information.
- As part of our transition to MSHG, we also made some changes to our Medicare plans for retired Town and School employees over the age of 65.
- Please see the benefits section of this document for more details on health insurance for active employees and retirees.
- The Town of Franklin, like the rest of the world, has experienced hiring and retention challenges over the last several years. Many workers have reevaluated their lives in the aftermath of COVID and many have chosen to pursue different careers or even retire earlier than expected. The Human Resources office has been busier than ever, but we have been very successful in hiring some wonderful new employees. We will need to be creative and do things a little outside the box in future years to keep up with the changing workforce trends, but are ready for the challenge.

DEPARTMENT: HUMAN RESOURCES	FUNCTION: GENERAL GOVERNMENT			DEPT #: 152		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels		
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final
PERSONAL SERVICES	170,805	185,959	251,397	260,903	260,903	-
EXPENSES	24,584	36,415	34,750	38,650	38,650	-
<b>TOTAL HUMAN RESOURCES :</b>	<b>\$195,389</b>	<b>\$222,373</b>	<b>\$286,147</b>	<b>\$299,553</b>	<b>\$299,553</b>	-

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

### General Purpose/Mission Statement:

The mission of the Technology Information Services Department is to provide reliable and dependable technology service and support to all Town and School District personnel and students and to maintain the underlying physical infrastructure to support the computing and learning environments. Employee salaries of this department are funded solely through the Franklin Public School's budget.

The Technology Information Services Department has 12 full-time and 2 part-time employees. The Department is a Town/School "merged" department, meaning we are responsible for supporting all town employees as well as all school employees (approximately 1000+) and approximately 4,800 public school students. These individuals utilize approximately 7,000 end-user computing devices including, but not limited to, chromebooks, desktops, laptops and tablets, which require access to a multitude of software and services. The computing and network environment consists of a private fiber optic wide area network (WAN) connecting 22 buildings throughout the town and providing access to over 100 file, application and print servers. Ubiquitous, enterprise-class wireless network access is provided in all school buildings and all town buildings.

The primary responsibilities of the Technology Information Services Department are as follows:

- Provide a reliable, stable Information Technology environment.
- Provide a secure network infrastructure for data, internet access and email communications.
- Provide and support a secure and reliable remote learning and working environment
- Provide the Town and Schools with proper support for our public facing websites.
- Provide secure and reliable backup of all user data.
- Work with the Facilities Department to create the proper physical environment to support ongoing and future technology initiatives.
- Make recommendations regarding changes and upgrades to existing technology.
- Increase efficiencies in all departments by researching and implementing new technologies.
- Support and build data continuity between departments.
- Approve all technology related purchases for the Town and School District.
- Adhere to state standards as related to technology.
- Generate and submit required state reports.
- Ensure proper software licensing and compliance.

### Staffing:

- 12 full-time employees
- 2 part-time employees
- All staff salaries are funded wholly via the school department with the exception of the Technology Security Specialist which is paid for 50/50 between the Town and School Department.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

### Strategic Initiatives:

- This past year 100 desktops were replaced across (mostly) town, and schools.
- Implemented Sophos Managed Detection and Response (MDR) anti ransomware security system town/school wide.
- Create a roll-out plan and implement Multi-Factor Authentication for Town and Schools.
- Currently beginning implementation of an electronic document management system for the HR department.
- Planning replacement of Wireless networking at police headquarters.
- Investigating Applicant tracking / hiring / onboarding system for HR department.

### Challenges:

- Staffing continues to be an issue in the Technology Sector. Finding viable candidates requires providing competitive wages and this is where we struggle the most. Especially in the more highly skilled positions requiring advanced degrees or experience.
- Funding the replacement of aging equipment is also a major hurdle Franklin faces with nearly \$1 Million in required technology replacement coming in the next 18 months. Continuous underfunding in this area will impact both worker productivity and quality of instruction in the schools.
  - A short list for 2023-2024:
    - 300 laptops for K-8 teachers: \$360,000
    - 400 Chromebooks for Grade 6 students: \$120,000
    - 140 Interactive boards at Franklin High School: \$378,000
  - The Director of Technology Services Tim Rapoza recommends the implementation of a Technology stabilization fund similar to the funding created for Franklin Fire for Fire Truck replacement.

DEPARTMENT: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	FUNCTION: GENERAL GOVERNMENT			DEPT #: 155		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels		
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final
PERSONAL SERVICES	-	31,713	37,645	36,952	36,952	-
EXPENSES	279,591	287,672	384,597	457,215	457,215	-
<b>TOTAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY :</b>	<b>\$279,591</b>	<b>\$319,385</b>	<b>\$422,242</b>	<b>\$494,167</b>	<b>\$494,167</b>	

### TOWN CLERK

#### General Purpose/Mission Statement:

The office of the Town Clerk is responsible for the management of statutory functions including: the maintenance of town records; coordination and administration of elections; issuance of permits and licenses;

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

recording and reporting of vital statistics; and other duties pertaining to the functions of the town clerk in accordance with the provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws.

Through its work as the keeper of permanent and vital records, the department is responsible for issuing marriage licenses, recording vital statistics, issuing dog licenses, registering businesses, licensing underground storage and hazardous materials, recording and collecting various citations, and updating and transmitting all approved new legislation to General Code. The Town Clerk also prepares the Annual Town Report and the Annual Street Listing.

The Town Clerk's office conducts elections in conformance with State, Federal and Local laws, and with the assistance of the Board of Registrars, processes voter registrations and certifications. The office is responsible for maintaining the Code of Franklin. The Clerk issues copies of the Open Meeting Law to newly appointed/elected officials, ensures that Conflict of Interest law is completed by all new members of Boards & Committees, conducts oath of office, certifies appropriations and borrowing authorizations.

### Staffing:

- 1 Elected Official
- 2 full-time employees
- 6 Senior Tax Workoff employees to assist annually with the Town Census

### Strategic Initiatives:

- The organization of the Town Clerk's vault has been completed. We will continue to keep the vault in an organized manner in order to be as efficient as possible.
- Continue to upgrade software and systems for the digital voter machines and Poll Pads for ease of voting and also upgrade all security devices and supplies needed to run a compliant, safe, and secure election.
- Provide excellent customer service. Service with a smile!

### State Regulations - State Computer (time sensitive)

- Certifying Nomination Papers.
- 2023 Census (over 13,000 dwelling units) - updates and changes (moved, name changes, occupation, additional family members, etc.) There are currently 3,708 dwelling units that have not responded. We are in the process of a second mailing and will perform it in-house to keep cost to a minimum and have an accurate count of residents in town.
- Voter Registration - New Registration, Pre-registration, Party Change etc. to stay in compliance with State Regulations.
- 2023 Elections - Tri-County (Oct) and Town Election (Nov) preparations
- The Town's population as of March 2023 is 32,857. This number includes 968 Dean College Students.
  - 24,148 Registered Voters
  - 7,741 Non-Voters

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

- 1,822 vacancies. The Town Clerk’s office is working with various Town and School departments, senior living facilities, landlords, and apartment complexes to determine if this number is accurate.

DEPARTMENT: TOWN CLERK		FUNCTION: GENERAL GOVERNMENT			DEPT #: 161		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	161,762	207,378	219,446	235,340	235,340	-	
EXPENSES	16,301	12,117	19,650	20,850	20,850	-	
<b>TOTAL TOWN CLERK :</b>	<b>\$178,063</b>	<b>\$219,495</b>	<b>\$239,096</b>	<b>\$256,190</b>	<b>\$256,190</b>	-	

**ELECTIONS & REGISTRATIONS**

**General Purpose/Mission Statement:**

Under state statute, the Town Clerk, by virtue of the position, is a member of the Board of Registrars and carries out the daily functions of this office along with the office staff. Major responsibilities include the conducting of elections, compilation of the annual Census and the Street/Voter Lists, certification of nomination papers and petitions, and maintenance and custody of the ballot boxes. The Town Clerk and their staff recruit election workers, process absentee ballots and record election results. They rely solely on the Commonwealth’s Central Voter Registry.

**Staffing:**

- 9 Wardens
- 3 Registrars
- 10-20 temporary part-time employees preparing vote by mail ballots

DEPARTMENT: ELECTION & REGISTRATION		FUNCTION: GENERAL GOVERNMENT			DEPT #: 164		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	107,795	15,575	33,629	19,480	19,480	-	
EXPENSES	36,518	31,845	42,700	55,700	55,700	-	
<b>TOTAL ELECTION &amp; REGISTRATION :</b>	<b>\$144,313</b>	<b>\$47,420</b>	<b>\$76,329</b>	<b>\$75,180</b>	<b>\$75,180</b>	-	

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS (ZBA)**

General Purpose/Mission Statement:

The appointed board currently consists of three (3) members and two (2) associate members. The board hears all appeals for zoning variances for the town in accordance with Mass General Laws. The Board holds public hearings, as advertised, for variances, special permits, findings and Chapter 40B applications. The Board also renders determinations on land use and zoning issues. This budget is for advertising costs.

DEPARTMENT: ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS		FUNCTION: GENERAL GOVERNMENT			DEPT #: 176		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
EXPENSES	7,770	4,309	10,000	9,000	9,000	-	
<b>TOTAL ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS :</b>	<b>\$7,770</b>	<b>\$4,309</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$9,000</b>	<b>\$9,000</b>	-	

**PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

General Purpose/Mission Statement:

Mission and Responsibilities. DPCD’s mission is to plan and implement comprehensive policies and initiatives that work to fulfill the community development and land use-related goals of the Town and its residents. We make every effort to maintain the character of the community while enhancing its economic vitality. The Department works in all areas of planning and community development, and is responsible for traditional land-use related activities such as updating the Town’s plans, and amending and creating zoning bylaws.

Support of Town Boards, Commissions, and Committees. DPCD’s most important function is to provide staff support to several boards, commissions and committees, including the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Design Review Commission, Cultural District Committee, Municipal Affordable Housing Trust, Technical Review Committee, and the Town Council’s Economic Development Subcommittee. In addition, DPCD staff frequently provide professional technical assistance to other public entities including Town Council, Zoning Board of Appeals, and various ad hoc committees, including the Master Plan Committee and Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee. Planning Board and Conservation Commission related issues utilize well over half of DPCD’s total staff hours. The DPCD Director also sits on the Franklin Downtown Partnership’s Board of Directors.

Projects and Initiatives. DPCD produces a substantial amount of quality work over and above its top priority of providing staff support to the organizations mentioned above. In recent years, DPCD has worked on dozens of projects in all areas of planning and community development, including comprehensive planning, downtown revitalization, economic development, open space preservation, wetlands protection, natural hazard mitigation, brownfields redevelopment, historic preservation, affordable housing, transit oriented development, and

sustainable development including the use of smart growth and low impact development concepts. In addition, DPCD manages the Town's Passport Acceptance Office.

The Department regularly identifies and sources funding for various community development projects and activities. DPCD balances its approach to these initiatives through long-term planning and public participation. DPCD will continue to undertake a wide range of community and economic development projects, programs, and planning initiatives that will keep the Town's goals and objectives current and representative of Franklin's needs and desires.

Staffing:

- 5 full-time employees
- 2 part-time employees

Strategic Initiatives:

- Provides helpful and timely customer service to both internal stakeholders and the general public who call for a variety of questions and public records requests.
- Continuously working to streamline permitting processes and convert to electronic applications and plan submittals.
- Economic Development and Zoning
  - Provides staff support to the Economic Development Subcommittee of the Town Council. Work during FY23 and FY24 includes implementation of "Franklin-For-All" related zoning amendment recommendations. The zoning changes are intended to incentivize economic growth and diverse housing opportunities in the Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.
  - Completed the multi-year Zoning District Line Cleanup Project.
- Cultural Economic Development.
  - Provides support to the Cultural District Committee in order to market and enhance the Franklin Cultural District, and obtain grant funding for special projects. The Town's efforts are resulting in the Franklin Cultural District being recognized as the arts and culture hub of the south MetroWest region. FY23 projects include assisting the CDC with their "Artsy Box" public art project.
  - Develop grant applications, and manage Cultural District related grants and budget for the Cultural District Committee.
- North Grove Priority Development Area

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- DPCD continues to work to complete assessment and remediation activities, and develop plans to sell and or redevelop the Town's Nu-Style Property, as well as revitalize the North Grove Priority Development Area (PDA).
- Applying for State and Federal funding needed to complete environmental assessment and remediation activities on the Town owned Nu-Style property; grants applied for during FY23 include a \$500,000 EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant.
- Applying for grants and technical assistance, to obtain the services required to plan and implement the proposed North Grove PDA Revitalization & Access Roadway Project.
- Worked with MassDevelopment and the Urban Land Institute, Boston/New England to complete an all day Technical Assistance Panel that brought several real estate, environmental and development professionals to Franklin to work on the North Grove PDA Revitalization & Access Roadway Project.
- Affordable Housing.
  - Working to implement the Town of Franklin's 2022 affordable Housing Production Plan (HPP). Work includes drafting an Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) zoning bylaw, and Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) related Zoning Amendments.
  - Worked with Franklin DPW and JNJUHL & Associates on implementation of a Mass Housing Choice grant funded project to design a water booster station, water mains and other infrastructure to support the Franklin Ridge senior housing development project.
  - Worked with Franklin DPW and JNJUHL & Associates on a MassWorks grant application to obtain funds needed for the construction of infrastructure needed for the Franklin Ridge & Veterans Memorial Way project. The Town was successful in receiving a \$3.2 million MassWorks Infrastructure Program grant for this project.
  - DPCD worked with the Administration and other Town Departments to develop a Request for Expressions of Interest (FY22) and a Request for Proposals (FY23) for the Town owned South Franklin Congregational Meeting House at 762 Washington Street. The process resulted in obtaining a purchaser/developer who will develop an affordable single family residence.
- Climate Change and Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning.
  - Working with other Town of Franklin departments, the Charles River Watershed Association, and 15+ other communities along the Charles River, on a Regional Watershed Modeling Project, which is resulting in creation of a river flood model that identifies areas vulnerable to flooding under future climate conditions.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

- Open Space and Recreation Plan.
  - Working with the Conservation Commission to update the 2016 Open Space and Recreation Plan, including implementation of an extensive public input process.
- DelCarte Conservation Area.
  - DPCD continues to implement the DelCarte Conservation Property Master Plan, including the ongoing pond treatments, and minor improvements.
- Open Space Preservation.
  - Work regularly with Town Administration and other Town departments on open space preservation projects.
- Master Plan.
  - Have begun working with the newly formed Master Plan Committee on the master plan update process. The updated Master Plan is expected to be completed in 2024.

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING & GROWTH MGMT		FUNCTION: GENERAL GOVERNMENT			DEPT #: 177		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	289,046	310,355	417,966	445,416	445,416	-	
EXPENSES	23,581	28,009	32,300	32,300	32,300	-	
<b>TOTAL PLANNING &amp; GROWTH MGMT :</b>	<b>\$312,627</b>	<b>\$338,364</b>	<b>\$450,266</b>	<b>\$477,716</b>	<b>\$477,716</b>	-	

**AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION**

General purpose/Mission statement:

The Agricultural Commission’s mission is to preserve, revitalize and sustain the Franklin Agricultural Industry and its lands. The Commission also encourages the pursuit of agriculture, promotes agricultural-based economic opportunities, and protects farmland. Please visit the [Ag Comm page](#) on the Town website for the latest meetings and efforts.

The Committee consists of five (5) members with 3 year terms and two (2) associates. Two of which must be active farmers, employed in an agriculture-related field or have experience and knowledge in agricultural practices or business.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Help educate the Franklin Community about produce in Franklin and help support the local agricultural business in town.
- Build relationships and help resolve conflicts between farms and neighbors or town boards.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- Serves as a resource on agricultural matters for all town boards and citizens.

DEPARTMENT: AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION		FUNCTION: GENERAL GOVERNMENT			DEPT #: 184		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
EXPENSES	-	147	1,000	1,000	1,000	-	
<b>TOTAL AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION :</b>	-	<b>\$147</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	-	

### PUBLIC PROPERTY & BUILDINGS (Town and School Facilities)

General Purpose/Mission Statement:

The Public Facilities Department’s mission is to:

- Manage the efficient operation and maintenance of town and school buildings
- Preserve the facility and equipment assets of the Town
- Plan and implement capital improvements
- Manage capital construction projects

The mission will be accomplished through establishing appropriate customer services in support of building users, fostering continuous improvement in the delivery of services, and establishing ongoing capital planning in collaboration with all Department Heads, Superintendent of Schools and their designees, and the Town Administrator.

The Public Facilities Department has the overall responsibility of caring for and maintaining 19 school and municipal buildings totaling 1,200,000 sf. The primary areas of service include custodial care and cleaning, building maintenance and repair (including preventative maintenance) and utilities.

Maintenance work is completed by the professional maintenance staff and by a full range of contractors specializing in fire alarms, heating controls, elevators, fire extinguishers, kitchen hoods, generators, backflow devices and playgrounds.

The Public Facilities Department strives to keep Franklin facilities clean and in excellent repair for all Town employees and citizens of Franklin. The Franklin Public Schools and town buildings are frequently mentioned in municipal circles as some of the most efficient and most well maintained facilities in the Commonwealth.

A recent Facilities Analysis of the Franklin Public School District shows that each one of our school buildings meets the criteria of “well maintained” in order to reach the building’s maximum potential. Of all of the “educational adequacy” criteria, the only criteria to be met on each checklist is that the facility is “well maintained.” The Town should feel a great deal of pride in the quality of performance of our school buildings. It

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

will be critical in these difficult times to find unique ways to ensure the Town does not fall back on maintaining its facilities, in particular our schools.

The Town of Franklin has been designated by the State as a Green Community. The Town of Franklin is among a category of communities accepted with a 20% reduction plan. As a Green Community, the Town will continue to implement strategies that result in energy cost savings and promote energy efficiencies in our buildings. The Town will seek grant funding when available to install, replace and enhance our systems and equipment to lower our energy consumption and reduce energy costs. [Franklin Green Community information here.](#)

The Director of Public Facilities and the Deputy Directors manage various capital projects and work closely with architects, owners, project managers, contractors and constituents from the community. The Director of Public Facilities maintains a long-term, 10 year capital plan, which the Town has worked hard to further develop over the last two years. All capital budget materials for the Public Facilities department can be found in our [Capital Budget Archive](#).

### Staffing:

- 6 administrative full time
- 34 school custodians
- 15 part-time municipal custodians
- 3 full-time tradespeople
- 1 part-time painter

### Strategic Initiatives & Current Efforts:

- The Town Council has authorized a building committee to be formed to start work on the schematic design of a Police Station that will meet the future staffing levels in Franklin. The Facilities Director and Deputy Director will work with the Building Committee later in the summer to select an OPM and an architect to perform this first design step.
- The Council has also formed a committee for the reuse of the Davis Thayer School. Facilities is currently performing a study with Kaestle Boos Associates as to possible reuse options that may be considered.
- The Town, with the use of CPA funding, is finishing the historic restoration of the Red Brick Schoolhouse. All lead paint was removed from the building last fall and winter and it will be a gleaming piece of history going forward for the town's people to enjoy. Over the Summer of 2023, also with CPA Funding, we will restore the Cupola on the top of the Franklin Historical Museum.
- This year we will be installing 8 EV charging spaces at Franklin High School. We have installed 16 spaces at other town buildings previously. The new spaces being installed will bring the total number of charging spaces to 24 at town and school buildings. These spaces will be used for town electric vehicles and also will be made available to the public. These stations are also necessary as the town is

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

adding 2 more Nissan Leaf full electric vehicles to its fleet in 2023 bringing our total to 4, with more to come over the next few years. 91% of the charging station cost and installation was paid for through state grants and NGRID incentives.

- Upcoming projects will be a proposed cell phone and radio tower in the Populatic section of Franklin that will enhance public safety radio coverage in this part of town. Another upcoming project slated for the summer of 2024 will be for the Remington Jefferson School complex. It will include new roofing, new fire alarm system and a new mechanical system for heating and cooling.
- LED light conversions have been completed in all school and town buildings in the Spring of 2023, making all buildings 100% lighted by LED. NGRID has been instrumental in providing Franklin with rebates for lighting conversions totaling up to \$200,000 every year since 2014.
- We have bid projects to update the Municipal building that was opened in 2004, with new carpet, security system, bathroom renovations, blinds and some furniture. Boiler replacements were completed in the Fall of 2022 adding super high efficiency Lochinvar boilers made in Tennessee.
- The Town bought into another solar farm in 2022 located in Bellingham and continues to get 95% of the Town's electricity from a PPA (power purchase agreement) with a solar farm located in Franklin and now Bellingham. We are currently negotiating an extension of the contract and a reduction of energy cost with the Franklin solar farm's new owner.
- We continue to run a full "preventative maintenance" system to better plan for schools', town buildings' and athletic fields' capital needs in the future. The maintenance team, carpenter John Rondeau, plumber Mike Carter and electrician David Gregoire, led by new Deputy Director Stephen O'Neill, accounted for over 1,900 staff work orders completed in town and school buildings in FY 2023 (April to April). In addition, they have helped manage all contractors and worked with staff in every department.

DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC PROPERTY & BUILDINGS		FUNCTION: GENERAL GOVERNMENT			DEPT #: 192		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	2,844,142	2,828,348	3,100,170	3,312,437	3,312,437	-	
EXPENSES	3,958,017	4,426,236	4,539,000	5,297,200	5,297,200	-	
<b>TOTAL PUBLIC PROPERTY &amp; BUILDINGS :</b>	<b>\$6,802,159</b>	<b>\$7,254,584</b>	<b>\$7,639,170</b>	<b>\$8,609,637</b>	<b>\$8,609,637</b>	-	

### CENTRAL SERVICES

General Purpose/Mission Statement:

The Central Services Budget includes all relative expenses to cover supplies and services for the Town/School shared copiers, folder/inserters and postage meter. The budget also covers the monthly costs associated with the Town's permanent record storage/retrieval and postage.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

DEPARTMENT: CENTRAL SERVICES		FUNCTION: GENERAL GOVERNMENT			DEPT #: 196		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
EXPENSES	127,383	119,242	150,500	161,000	161,000	-	
<b>TOTAL CENTRAL SERVICES :</b>	<b>\$127,383</b>	<b>\$119,242</b>	<b>\$150,500</b>	<b>\$161,000</b>	<b>\$161,000</b>	-	

## PUBLIC SAFETY

### POLICE DEPARTMENT

#### General Purpose/Mission Statement:

The mission of the Franklin Police Department is to work collaboratively in partnership with our community to enhance the quality of life in our town, while maintaining order and protecting the people we serve. We will accomplish this mission by providing high quality law enforcement service, doing so with professionalism, honor and integrity.

Our primary function as stated in our Mission Statement is to enhance the quality of life while protecting and serving the Citizens of the Town of Franklin and the general public at large. This responsibility is accomplished by all employees of the department, but mostly through the efforts of the Operations Division who handle a majority of the requests for service the agency receives. This division consists of one (1) lieutenant, seven (7) sergeants and thirty (30) patrol officers. The main task of the Operations Division is motorized patrol, responding to calls for service, traffic enforcement, parking related issues and performing initial investigations.

Our Specialized Services Division, led by a Lieutenant, is divided into two separate functions consisting of the Criminal Investigations / Court Unit and the Community Services Unit. The Criminal investigations / Court Unit consists of one (1) sergeant, five (5) investigative officers, and one (1) court officer. Their responsibility is the investigation of all major crimes, narcotics investigations, and follow-up investigations received as a result of initial reports submitted by the Operations Division. Due to the ever-present threat of illegal narcotics, one of the investigators is exclusively tasked with investigating narcotics related activities and one investigator is assigned full-time in a multi-agency task force with the Homeland Security Investigations agency of the Treasury Department. The Court Prosecutor is responsible for all District, Superior and Juvenile court cases making sure they are well prepared and ready for successful prosecution.

Our Community Services Unit consists of one (1) sergeant and three (3) patrol officers. Unlike many other towns and cities throughout the state, we have been fortunate to assign these four the primary task of oversight of our public schools. It is our belief that their presence has been nothing short of a positive experience for students, faculty, the police department and town. Their activities also include programs working with our elderly, youth, schools and local businesses.

The Administrative Services Division is responsible for managing all administrative related tasks such as records, information technology, accounting, finance, personnel & scheduling, facilities management, grant management, recruitment & training, firearms licensing, etc. To accomplish these tasks the division consists of one lieutenant, one administrative patrol officer and two civilian administrative personnel.

#### Staffing:

- Fifty-four (58) Sworn Officer Personnel
- Two (2) Administrative Civilian Personnel

Strategic Initiatives:

- **Law Enforcement Accreditation:** On October 26, 2022, the Franklin Police Department was awarded Law Enforcement Accreditation by the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission (MPAC). After five years of hard work and tireless determination by personnel, the department met the 382 standards necessary to obtain accreditation. Achieving accreditation is not an easy task. Of the 351 municipalities in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, only 96 have achieved accreditation. Only 11 of the 28 communities in Norfolk County have been awarded accreditation. Law Enforcement Accreditation is a “Badge of Honor” in the Law Enforcement Profession. It is one of the best measures of a Police Department’s compliance with professional Law Enforcement standards.
- **Therapy Dog Program:** In February, 2019, the department established a Therapy Dog Program with the purchase of Ben Franklin (Golden Retriever puppy). Ben immediately won over the hearts of the town residents and people throughout the country due to his being the cutest dog you ever saw and his continuing antics. To capitalize on the success of the program, increase availability of a therapy dog when needed and to ensure the continuity of the program; the department purchased “Frankie” a female chocolate Labrador Retriever in February 2023. Frankie has started her training program for therapy dogs and will also attend friendly find training so she may be used to locate missing individuals during search and rescue incidents. Frankie is expected to conclude her training and be ready for service for the start of the 2023 – 2024 school year.
- **Dean College Internship:** The Dr. Pietro (Pete) Savo Criminal Justice Internship Program, in collaboration with Dean College has been a major success. The program was established in 2021 in honor of Dr. Pietro Savo, a beloved member of the Dean community and the Program Coordinator for the Criminal justice and Homeland Security programs prior to his unexpected passing. The internship provides the opportunity for one student each semester to gain valuable experience in the field of law enforcement and provides the student with valuable information should they be interested in further pursuing a career in law enforcement. Students are exposed to the daily operations of the department, participate in training and learn about the different programs and initiatives the department offers and is currently working to implement. The program has successfully hosted 5 interns to date.
- **Police Station Building Committee:** The department is excited the Franklin Town Council recently passed a resolution to form a Police Station Building Committee. The 10 person Building Committee will evaluate all options to expand and/or build a new police station for the future public safety needs of the community. The duties of the committee will be to select an architect for the needs analysis and design, evaluate all potential expansion and renovation options for the current and future needs of the Franklin Police, present the proposed plans to the Town Council for approval and oversee the project until substantial completion. The department looks forward to working with the Building Committee to get this needed project started as the current police station is sorely lacking the space, infrastructure and technology needed to support a professional law enforcement agency.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

- **Two-Way Radio Communication Project:** With the completion of phase 2 of the two-way radio and communication project last year, the department is continuing to work with the Facilities Department and the Franklin Fire Department to modernize our public safety communications system. Phase 3 will include obtaining a simulcast license from the Federal Communications Commission, the purchase and installation of simulcast equipment at several transmission locations and the construction of a radio tower in northern Franklin by a private vendor with the ability for public safety communications equipment installation.
- **Co-Response Jail Diversion Program:** The Co-Response Jail Diversion Program continues to be extremely active and successful. During 2022, officers and our program clinician completed 369 interventions of individuals encountered in a mental health related incident. This represents a significant decrease from 2021 (581) and 2020 (629). We were without the services of a clinician for the first five months (January – May) of 2022 as we were in the process of hiring a clinician. Using statistics from 2020 and 2021 we can confidently estimate if we had a clinician on staff, they would have completed an additional 249 interventions bringing the total to 618 interventions for calendar year 2022. Thirteen (13) individuals with behavioral health conditions were diverted from arrest and into treatment. In addition to the benefit of diverting individuals in crisis from arrest, these diversions represent an estimated cost savings of \$38,870 to the criminal justice system (\$2,990 per arrest event). Fifty-two (52) individuals were diverted from unnecessary hospital admissions to facilitate outpatient treatment recommendations. In addition to receiving care outside of a hospital setting, these emergency department diversions represent an estimated health care cost savings of \$140,400 (\$2,700 per ED diversion). Although we have received funding through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to add a much needed second clinician to the program, due to the increasing need for mental health related services, we have encountered obstacles in the hiring process. We hope to rectify this situation and have a second clinician on board starting in FY24.

<b>Calendar Year</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Interventions</b>	629	581	618

- **Traffic Enforcement Focus:** The department has always placed a premium on utilizing non-directed patrol time to enforce motor vehicle laws in an effort to reduce speeding, stop and signal light violations, motor vehicle accidents and other related motor vehicle laws. When the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, the department’s priorities and the manner in which we operated necessitated a change due to social distancing. Traffic enforcement was no longer a priority due to less people traveling and the need to keep our personnel safe and healthy which resulted in social distancing guidelines that reduced in person encounters. Some took advantage of these operational and societal changes by refusing to abide with motor vehicle laws. We understand traffic violations are a major concern to our residents, town administration personnel and our legislative leaders. It is by far the largest complaint we receive from our residents. The department has made a commitment to re-energize our traffic enforcement efforts with the goal of increasing voluntary compliance from the motor vehicle traveling public. Our staffing level in the Operations Division, coupled with our increasing call for service volume does not allow for regularly assigning an officer on directed patrol to conduct traffic enforcement. Far too often, a shift is deployed with the minimum number of officers needed to answer calls for services and to

advance officer safety. We need additional staff assigned to the Operations Division so we may regularly assign directed traffic enforcement patrols if we want to successfully gain voluntary compliance. We have recently received funding through the FY23 capital budget to purchase a speed enforcement / sign board which will increase our fleet to three of these successful and often requested tools.

- IACP Trust Building Campaign: The department is pleased to announce it has recently elected to join the International Chiefs of Police (IACP) Trust Building Campaign. This is a campaign that seeks to enhance trust between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve by ensuring positive police/community partnerships that promote safe, effective interactions, create strategies to prevent and reduce crime, and improve the well-being and quality of life for all. The FPD has pledged, over the next 36 months, to implement 25 key policies and adopt promising practices in six key focus areas that are essential to enhance the trust and collaboration between a police department and its community. The key areas are Bias-Free Policing, Use of Force, Leadership & Culture, Recruitment / Hiring / Retention, Victim Services and Community Relations. We anticipate completion of the pledge well before the 36-month timeline as we have found the department is already in compliance with a majority of the 25 key policies and practices.
- Training: The department will continue its robust training program centered on tactics and responses to critical incidents, especially active shooter related incidents. In May 2023, the FPD and the Franklin Fire Department will participate in a joint training exercise designed to improve integration between law enforcement, fire and emergency medical services (EMS) during an active shooter event. The training will concentrate on the concept of a Rescue Task Force, defined as a temporary team of personnel composed of law enforcement and fire /EMS, whose primary function is to enter the critical incident scene in order to provide emergency medical care and evacuation.
- Body-Worn Cameras: The Massachusetts legislature created the Law Enforcement Body Camera Task Force in the act Relative to the Justice, Equity and Accountability in Law Enforcement in the Commonwealth, otherwise known as the police reform law, for the purpose of drafting recommended regulations for the procurement and use of body-worn cameras by law enforcement officers, and minimum requirements for the storage and transfer of audio and video recordings collected by body-worn cameras. In August 2022, the task force issued their recommended regulations. The department has reviewed the recommendations and has created a project team to coordinate the goals, objectives and desired outcomes with the implementation of a body-worn camera solution at the Franklin Police Department. We have started the process of obtaining demonstrations from body-worn camera vendors, reviewing policies and preparing to submit a grant through the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS).
- Officer Health & Wellness Program: The department has instituted a number of physical wellness related programs by offering planned exercise regimens and has recently updated the small gym at the station. Future plans include the creation of a Health and wellness coordinator position who will be tasked with creating initiatives and programs designed to assist personnel with physical, mental, and financial health, as well as resiliency.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

Budget Impacts:

- The Franklin Police Department budget is driven by approximately 95% personnel services (salaries) and 5% expenses. Overall, the entire budget is 97% contract driven. The department has come perilously close to spending in excess of our budgeted personnel expenses side of the budget in three of the last four fiscal years.

<b>FY20</b>	<b>FY21</b>	<b>FY22</b>
99.7%	98.6%	96.8%

Some may argue this is the result of good budgeting practice. Others may argue that this leaves very little room for unexpected occurrences that public safety agencies regularly encounter like critical incidents requiring abundant overtime expenditures or the loss of personnel to retirements, injuries resulting in disabilities or employees leaving for other employment opportunities (including private sector employment). Whatever you may ascribe to, the fact is we continue to have a difficult time accurately predicting overtime expenditures due to turnover because of our current staffing levels.

- The department's sworn officer complement during FY23 was the same it was in FY22, at 54 officers. As you may recall, the department's budget in FY2000 included funding for 54 officers. The agency never realized 54 officers, due to fiscal issues and the largest sworn officer complement realized was 50 officers during FY2000. It has taken the agency 22 years to reach the number of sworn officers that were budgeted for and needed back in 2000. The population of the Town of Franklin and the call for service volume has significantly increased during the past 22 years.
- You may recall that in 2021, the department conducted a research study consisting of ten (10) police departments servicing communities in Massachusetts with a population between 30,000 and 36,000 (average: 33,634) for comparison purposes. The results revealed the average number of sworn police officers for the ten (10) communities was 58.8. The largest complement was the City of Braintree at 77, servicing a population of 35,744. A review of the study was recently conducted and most of the 9 agencies either retained a similar or slightly increased their staffing levels since 2021. It is quite clear from the results that the Franklin Police Department is understaffed when compared with communities servicing a similar population.
- Although understaffed when compared to comparable communities, we have succeeded in providing quality law enforcement service. Similar to other departments in town, we have diligently focused our efforts to sustain a high level of service. We have accomplished this while simultaneously witnessing an increased demand in services due to resident population increases. Eventually an agency will reach a point where its ability to maintain level service with available resources is unrealistic. When this occurs, major consideration must be given to increasing the available resources in an effort to continue to provide level service. Even with the progressive measures we have taken internally to increase needed personnel, it is not sufficient. Future staffing increases are necessary if we want to continue to meet the

demand for services and those increases in personnel will only occur if the department receives a corresponding increase to the budget. There are no more innovative budget maneuvers available to increase our staffing.

- The department's current staffing levels in the Operations Division (7 Sergeants / 30 patrol officers) only allow for the scheduling of one officer over the minimum number required throughout the day to meet the current call for service volume and provide adequate personnel to ensure officer safety. When the department is fully staffed (all 54 positions) with no vacancies due to officer turnover (retirements), illnesses, injuries or other issue that may cause an officer to be removed from the schedule for a lengthy period of time, the schedule we use with one over the minimum is adequate, but not optimum. It is not optimum because we are frequently experiencing personnel shortages. The department has been at full staff with all officer positions filled and all personnel healthy and reporting to work for a total of 4 weeks over the past 6 years. On several occasions the department has experienced 4 or more officers out of work and not scheduled on several occasions. The department has hired 30 officers over the past six years and expects additional vacancies due to retirements. When staffing only allows for the scheduling of only one officer over the minimum combined with the inevitable loss of personnel due the previous reasons cited above, the agency frequently finds itself understaffed. As witnessed over the last five years, this phenomenon causes increased overtime expenditures that often result in personnel being forced to work overtime when they would prefer not to work. This issue also causes problems related to training and officer scheduling as training may need to be canceled and officers may need to be reassigned from specialty positions (detectives, community service positions) to ensure Operations is properly staffed and the department finishes the fiscal year within budget. Forced overtime, canceled training opportunities, canceled time off requests and reassignment from specialty positions all have a negative effect on department operations and officer morale. Most law enforcement and other public safety agencies strive to schedule two or more personnel over the minimum required, similar to our own fire department, in an effort to avoid or minimize the issues we are experiencing.
- When officers do not voluntarily agree to work necessary overtime, the department has no choice but to force officers to work. Due to the large amount of turnover and other factors the department has had to contend with, such as the COVID pandemic, the department has experienced a major increase in the number of opportunities officers have been forced to work overtime to meet the minimum number of officers on shift. The issue pertaining to officers being forced to work is not unique to the Franklin Police Department. Police departments throughout the Commonwealth and the country have experienced what has been termed a culture shift amongst newer officers. Where veteran officers and recent retirees welcomed overtime opportunities throughout the past several decades, newer officers are not as interested in working longer hours or the premium pay that comes with the overtime. They also put a premium on their time off and spending time with their families. For the last 50 years or more, the formula for staffing public safety agencies has relied on hiring a set number of officers needed to meet service demand and covering the benefitted time off personnel enjoy and occasional personnel shortages with overtime. This system worked well when an agency scheduled 2 or more officers above the minimum required and had a majority of personnel who coveted the extra income and voluntarily accepted the overtime work. The Franklin Police Department is being adversely affected

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

by a combination of lacking the ability to staff the shifts with sufficient personnel, an abundant amount of turnover and having less personnel desiring to voluntarily work the increased amount of overtime.

- The department's current staffing level is also the reason the agency almost exclusively hires academy trained transfer officers rather than hiring from the candidate list generated from the entry examination we conduct every 2-3 years. To hire a non-trained individual off of the list to fill a vacancy would require sending the candidate to a police academy. From the candidate selection (interviews, background checks, pre-employment screenings, locating a seat at an academy) which takes 3-4 months, to the completion of the academy (6 months) and a 3-month field training program, the entire process takes no less than 12-13 months. This would equate to an open position on the schedule for an entire year before it would be filled. An academy trained and experienced transfer officer may fill the open position in as little as 3-4 months. The department simply cannot afford to have an open position for a year. The budget cannot sustain it and the additional forced overtime would only continue to erode morale among the personnel. Not being fiscally able to use the entry examination list when hiring does have a negative impact on the goal of diversification of personnel. When advertising for open positions requesting transfer applicants, we have no control over who applies. We interview and seek the best candidates for the position from the applicants who apply. If the department had the ability to utilize the entry exam candidate list, we could interview candidates who meet the criteria we seek in our efforts to provide diversification of personnel.
- Budget Request: The department's FY24 budget request includes two significant increases after accounting for regular increases related to Collective Bargaining Agreements with the Franklin Police Association and the Franklin Police Sergeants Union that cover FY23 – FY25.
  - On the expense side of the budget, we are requesting an increase of \$54,391.00 from FY23. A majority of this increase (\$34,210) is a result of including several expenses in the FY24 operating budget that have historically been included in the towns capital budget. The Conducted Energy Weapon (Taser) Lease Program (\$14,610), Information Technology Maintenance Program (\$4,000), Body Armor Replacement Program (\$15,600) were all included in the FY24 operating budget. The remaining increase of \$20,181 represents increases subject to inflation, increases associated with various software maintenance contracts and supplementing line items the department has found have been regularly underfunded over several fiscal years.
  - A major portion of the increase in the personnel services (salaries) side of the budget is due to our request to hire four (4) additional patrol officers in FY24 (\$331,644). This would increase our sworn officer complement from 54 to 58. These four (4) new officers would be assigned to the Operations Division, increasing the staffing levels to two (2) or more officers above the necessary minimum for 20 of 24 hours each day. When staffed with two or more officers above the minimum many of the issues and negative consequences outlined previously would be drastically reduced, if not eliminated. It would provide the following:

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

- Bring the FPD in line with current public safety standards for deployment of personnel and scheduling of two or more officers over the necessary minimum.
- Account for current and anticipated increases in call for service volume, especially those incidents involving a mental health crisis that frequently require an extended time to resolve.
- Safety of the officers would be enhanced with more officers assigned.
- Allow for increased traffic enforcement, the largest request for service we receive, due to the ability to assign more frequent directed patrols.
- Place the department in a much better position to deal with known and unanticipated events causing personnel reductions (retirements, injuries, resignations for other employment, etc.).
- It realizes the cultural change associated with overtime and increases morale due to the reduction of forced overtime.
- Allows the department additional options not currently available pertaining to the hiring of personnel that will enhance our ability toward personnel diversification.
- It assists in maintaining our high training standards as required by the Massachusetts Police Training Council (MPTC), Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission and our own training programs by having sufficient personnel to cover officers attending training without it consistently requiring overtime expenditures.
- With 34 officers assigned to the Operations Division and scheduling 2 over the minimum, the department expects a decline in overtime expenditures. The department anticipates it will obtain the ability to reduce FY25 overtime coverage line items by 10 – 15%. The agency elected to fully fund overtime coverage line items in FY24 because we do not know when the four new officers will be hired and working on the schedule. We also have no prior history of providing a schedule with 2 officers over the minimum to make a comparison. This chart is an example of the cost increase and estimated overtime coverage reductions with the acquiring of 4 new officers using FY24 budget requests:

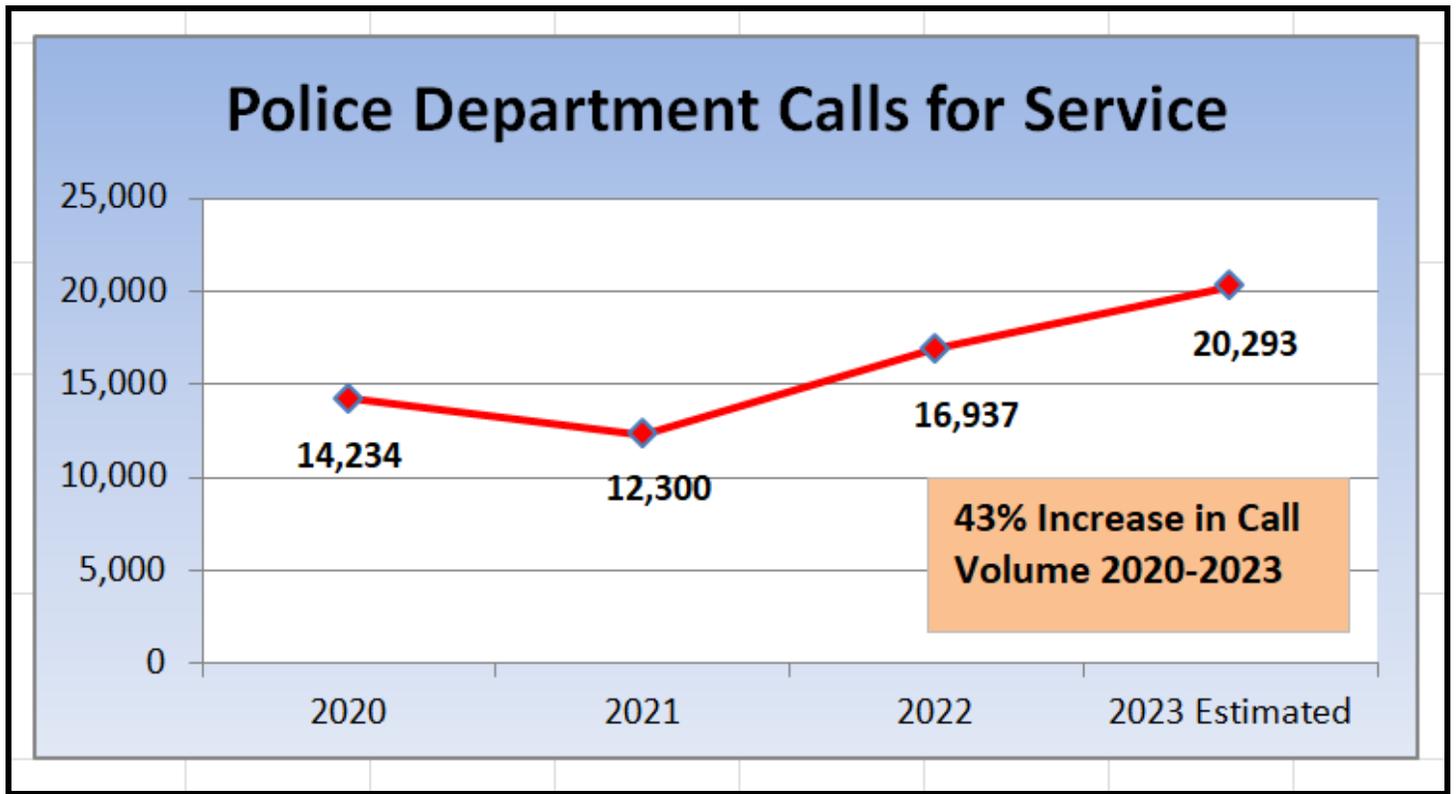
<b>Salary</b>	<b>Expense</b>	<b>Overtime Coverage</b>	<b>Reduction</b>	
Officer #1	\$92,703	Holiday Replacement	(\$17,457)	
Officer #2	\$92,703	Illness Coverage	(\$13,371)	
Officer #3	\$73,119	Vacation Coverage	(\$23,105)	
Officer #4	\$73,119	Scheduled OT / PD	(\$4,364)	
		Non-Scheduled OT	(\$27,685)	
		Training	(\$15,937)	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$331,644</b>		<b>(\$101,919)</b>	<b>\$229,725</b>

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

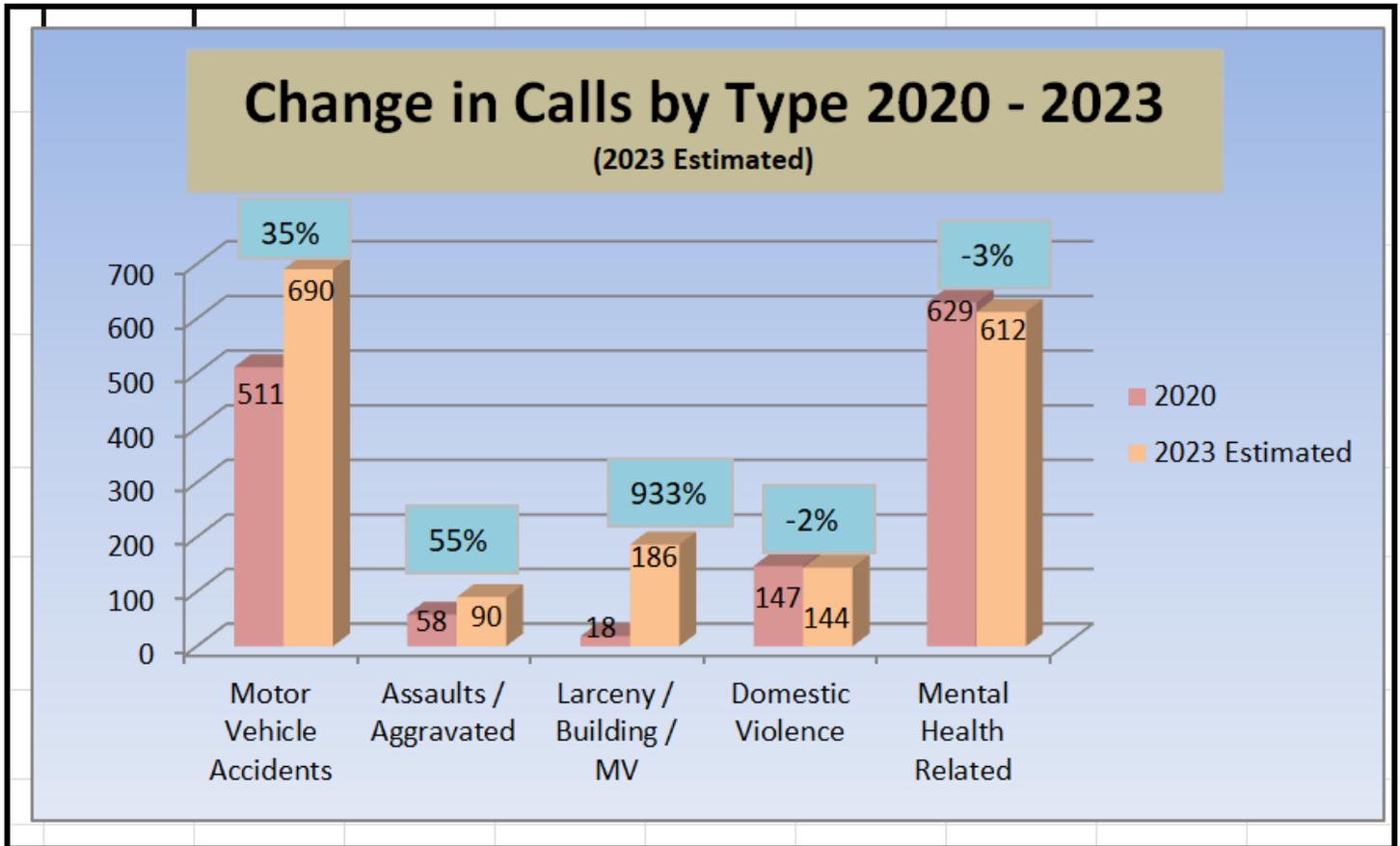
Police Department Calls for Service Trends:

Call Type	2020	2021	2022	2023 as of 03/01/23	2023 Estimated
<b>Calls for Service</b>	14,234	12,300	16,937	3,783	20,293
<b>Motor Vehicle Accidents</b>	511	582	596	130	690
<b>Assaults / Aggravated</b>	58	73	105	15	90
<b>Larceny / Building / MV</b>	18	147	217	31	186
<b>Domestic Violence</b>	147	176	163	21	144
<b>Mental Health Related</b>	629	581	618	102	612

There has been a 43% increase in call volume over the past 3 years from 2020 to 2023.



The next chart illustrates the change in the type of calls in certain categories. These categories (call types) have increased considerably over the years.



DEPARTMENT: POLICE		FUNCTION: PUBLIC SAFETY			DEPT #: 210		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	5,360,673	5,567,483	6,018,217	6,652,746	6,652,746	-	
EXPENSES	228,982	242,769	316,140	373,931	373,931	-	
<b>TOTAL POLICE :</b>	<b>\$5,589,655</b>	<b>\$5,810,252</b>	<b>\$6,334,357</b>	<b>\$7,026,677</b>	<b>\$7,026,677</b>	-	

**FIRE DEPARTMENT**

General Purpose/Mission Statement:

The Franklin Fire Department is committed to providing the highest level of public safety services for our community. We safely protect lives and property through fire suppression, training, emergency medical and transportation services, disaster and crisis management, fire prevention, and public education.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

The operational objectives of the department are to:

- Initiate advanced life support to patients within 8 minutes of receiving the telephone call at our communications center.
- Access, extricate, treat and transport trauma patients to a level one trauma medical facility within one hour of the occurrence of the injury.
- Interrupt the progression of fires in structures within 8 minutes of receiving the telephone call at our communications center.
- Investigate ways to improve response times in certain areas of the Town.
- Teach fire and life safety skills to all students in grades K through 5, consistent with the Student Awareness of Fire Education (SAFE) initiative of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
- Provide continued valuable services to the senior population, including home safety inspections and smoke/carbon monoxide detector battery replacement. Also, provide community outreach through hosted social gatherings, including the annual St. Patrick's Day corned beef dinner at the senior center.
- Promote fire prevention and safety through timely, consistent code compliance services to the community.
- Partner with the new board members for the Franklin Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SEPAC).
- Provide educational opportunities for department members to ensure optimal performance and safety.
- Develop and maintain "best practices" to ensure personnel and citizen safety.

Staffing:

- 58 Sworn Firefighter/Paramedic Personnel
- 1 full-time Executive Assistant

Strategic Initiatives:

- Budget Requests: The FY24 Budget includes one new Captain/Paramedic and one additional FF/Paramedic dedicated to the EMS Division, bringing total department personnel to 58 members. If funded, these positions will assist the EMS Battalion Chief with the day to day administrative operations of the EMS Division, such as conducting internal EMS training and presenting outreach initiatives throughout the Town, while also being available to respond to emergency incidents during times of

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

increased call volume. As the data shows, calls for service are greatest on weekdays, between the hours of 7 AM to 6 PM; therefore, having this additional day staff will give us the opportunity to staff either a third rescue or Tower 1 more consistently during times of greatest need. We feel this strategy will provide the additional needed support to meet our increased volume of calls for service in a fiscally responsible manner. Lastly, the FY24 budget includes the costs of the collective bargaining agreement.

- **Challenges:** As our annual call volume continues to increase year-after-year, 2022 was the first time in the history of the Department that we responded to over 5,000 emergency calls. In addition, as the surrounding communities are also seeing similar call volume increases, the requests for us to provide mutual aid ambulances has steadily increased as well. With the requested additional personnel, the Department intends to meet these increasing needs in the most cost effective manner for the citizens of Franklin. Your Franklin Firefighter/Paramedics continue to be the chief reason that the department is able to maintain the high level of professionalism and standard of care we provide you each and every day. Existing, new, and proposed buildings in Town present additional demands for the department. Over 70 structures in town are at least three stories or taller, which requires additional personnel at the onset of an incident to mitigate emergencies. There are over 550 residential units proposed to be added in Town, along with a handful of commercial buildings, which over the next couple of years will increase the demand for fire and emergency services.
- **Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA):** The CBA for the period 7/1/22 through 6/30/25 was unanimously ratified by the Town Council and the Local union. Staff morale and culture are driving the department with an inclusive and expansive set of goals and achievements. The Fire Department has never been in a better position with its members.
- **Dean College Relations:** Continue a solid working relationship with the new leadership at Dean College to coordinate with their four year old paramedic program to benefit the school as well as enhance recruitment efforts for the Department in the future. We feel this is an important relationship to foster and establish strong communication channels to have in place to assist in safety messaging to the campus community. The Department works very closely with the campus security team to promote fire safety initiatives and training throughout the campus.
- **Secondary School Relations:** Encourage a solid working relationship with both the Franklin High School and Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School through our SAFE program to expose students to a rewarding career as a Firefighter/Paramedic. As a function of our SAFE program, seniors may be eligible to participate in either a two-month senior project or a year-long internship, depending upon which school they attend.
- **Ambulance Transport Fees:** Subject to annual review, ambulance transport billing fees were adjusted with Town Council approval effective March 17, 2023. This annual review and adjustment, calculated as the average of our billing vendor's top fifty fire service clients in the area, ensures that our rates remain in line with the rates of the surrounding communities. In FY23, we anticipate receipts for ambulance transports, billed through a third party billing service, to exceed \$2.2 million. Additionally, the Department participates in the Ambulance Certified Public Expenditures (CPE) Program, which is a

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

voluntary opportunity to recover additional Medicaid allowable costs. We are anticipating \$253,878 to be reimbursed to the Town before the close of FY23. Both these ambulance transport fees and CPE funds are deposited into the Town's General Fund.

- Grants: Since July 2019, the Department has received \$1,499,720.58 in grants. A Grant Committee is composed of off-duty department members, who volunteer their time pursuing and applying for funding opportunities that help offset department costs to the taxpayers. Some recent grant awards include:
  - Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) - \$8,500 generator
  - Massachusetts Department of Fire Services (DFS) - \$24,998 Technical Rescue
  - SAFE - \$5,481: Senior SAFE - \$2,477
  - AFG Grant - \$632,268 to replace portable radios (regional with Norfolk)
- Donations: We are very grateful to all the businesses and members of the community who have made generous donations to the Department. In total, local banking institutions alone have made over \$50,000 in donations to the Department, since July 2019, which is in addition to the many generous donations received from local, private citizens.
- Insurance Services Office (ISO) Class 1: On July 1, 2022 we were honored to be designated an ISO 1 Fire Department being the 9th department in Massachusetts, 15th in New England and 459<sup>th</sup> in the Nation to achieve this classification. This effort was a collaboration of many people throughout the Town including the Water Department division for playing such an integral role with this significant accomplishment. This improved classification not only recognizes our readiness to quickly and efficiently extinguish a fire but allows all property owners in Town the potential of a reduction in insurance policy premiums for both residential and commercial property owners. We are extremely grateful to all the men and women in this Department as well as others throughout the Town including elected officials who have all worked very hard to reach this amazing milestone. The Department is extremely proud of this accomplishment and will continue to maintain this high standard of service to the community. For more information, [click here](#).
- Emergency Management Agency (EMA): The Town's Municipal Vulnerability Plan (MVP) and Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) were both updated and approved by FEMA and the Town Council a few years ago which will afford the Town future opportunities to secure funding for mitigation projects in trouble areas throughout town to prevent future costs. Additionally, the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) will be updated with the assistance of Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) from its previous 2012 version effective July 1, 2023. These updated plans provide the Town the opportunity to receive Federal funding for mitigation and preparedness projects.
- Capital: The Department was granted approval by the Town Council for several capital expenditures including turnout gear, EMS equipment, meters and forcible entry/extrication equipment totaling

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

\$379,199. Fortunately, the recent award of a regional AFG grant of \$632,268 allows the replacement of our portable radios for all our department members with no future cost to the Town from capital funds. We are grateful for the continuous support of the Town Council and Finance Committee to allow the purchase of these important items.

- **Training:** As the growth in the volume and complexity of the citizen's demands for emergency services remain a challenge, the Department has a future goal of building its own training facility in town. Currently, the department is unable to conduct live fire training without having to travel to different communities throughout the Commonwealth. A new training facility would allow members to train on duty while still remaining in town to address emergency incidents, as they occur. Additionally, being able to do more training while on-duty would help offset training overtime costs associated with having to cover personnel that are out of the region for training. In the past, the Milford Fire Department has been kind enough to let us utilize their burn building / training tower for free. However, due to its age and deteriorating conditions, Milford has had to suspend the use of the training building for structural and safety concerns. No other city or town within 35 miles has such a facility that we can utilize, especially at no cost. As such, fire department administration has been actively investigating two locations within the Town as potential training facility sites, along with seeking funding opportunities to complete this project.
- **Apparatus:** The Department took delivery of a new ambulance, located at Headquarters, in September 2022. The Station 2 ambulance had been replaced previously in 2021. In addition to the two front-line ambulances, the Department maintains two reserve ambulances. The Headquarters reserve ambulance is fully equipped and ready to respond to emergency incidents, during times of increased call volume, should we have the available personnel. The Station 2 reserve ambulance can be placed into service, if one of the front line trucks is down for maintenance, but requires the movement of equipment from the ambulance being taken out of service. The ambulance replacement schedule is based upon 2 years of front-line service, to assure dependability, followed by many years of reserve service to maintain appropriate coverage and availability. At the February 1, 2023 Town Council meeting, the town council members unanimously approved the purchase of a 2025 Pierce Tower Ladder, due to be delivered in the spring/summer of 2025, to replace the current 2008 Pierce Tower Ladder, which will be kept by the Town as a reserve truck at this point in time. As a reserve tower ladder, this piece of apparatus will not only be able to serve as the primary aerial apparatus, when the front-line tower is out for service, but will also be accessible to other town departments, such as the Water Department, when the need arises. Assigned to Headquarters, Rescue 1, which was the previous Engine 1, has been repurposed as a Heavy Rescue Pumper, equipped with specialized equipment to respond to "low incidence, high risk" calls, such as technical rescue, hazardous materials, and water rescue. Our two front-line engines, Engine 1 and Engine 2, which were purchased in 2021, are serving the Town very well with an additional reserve engine available, if needed.
- **Health/Wellness:** The Department has recently established a department Health & Wellness Committee that is composed of members throughout the Department. Their mission is to work with the Town with a focus on improving the health and wellness initiatives of our greatest asset - our firefighters. Programs being discussed with the Town include nutrition, physical training and medical screening.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

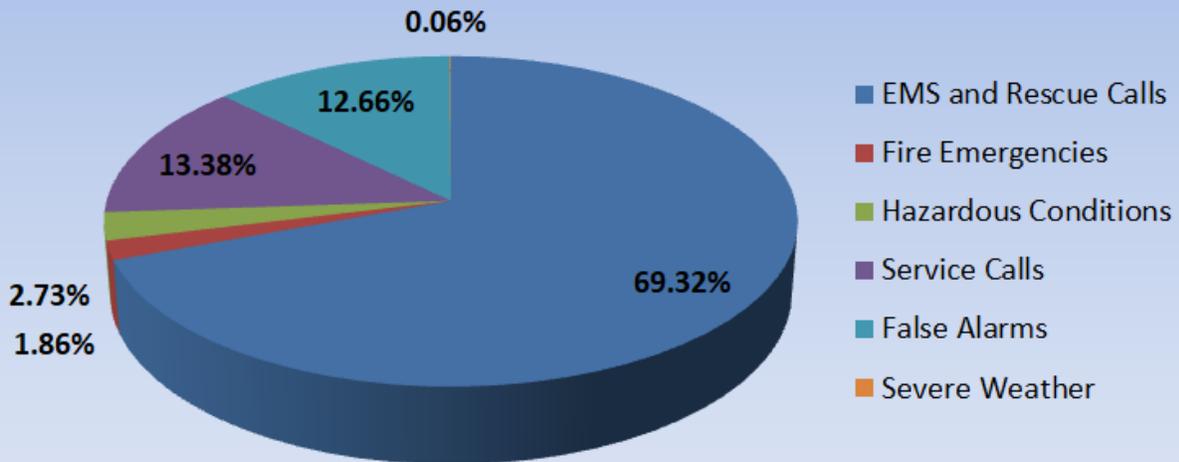
- The total number of calls for CY22 was 5,120 calls with 3,549 being rescue calls and 1,571 being fire, or other emergency, calls. Similarly to past years, EMS calls comprise approximately 69% of the emergency calls. With regards to ambulance mutual aid, we received mutual aid on 247 calls and rendered mutual aid on 155 calls to other communities in CY22. We will continue to closely monitor data on the occurrences of mutual aid calls received from neighboring departments, which occur when both our first-due ambulances are already committed on calls.

The Department will continue to remain steadfast to provide the highest level of service that the community both deserves and expects in the future. There is the utmost confidence that call volume to the community will be increasing every year going forward. The restructuring of the Department in July 2020, along with the FY24 request for two more members, will provide the resources needed at this point in time to properly meet the needs of the community. A well-staffed, trained and equipped department on the front lines is the most effective defense for the community. The Franklin Fire Department is extremely fortunate to have great support from the Town Administrator, Town Council, Finance Committee and the whole community to perform its vital mission to the community.

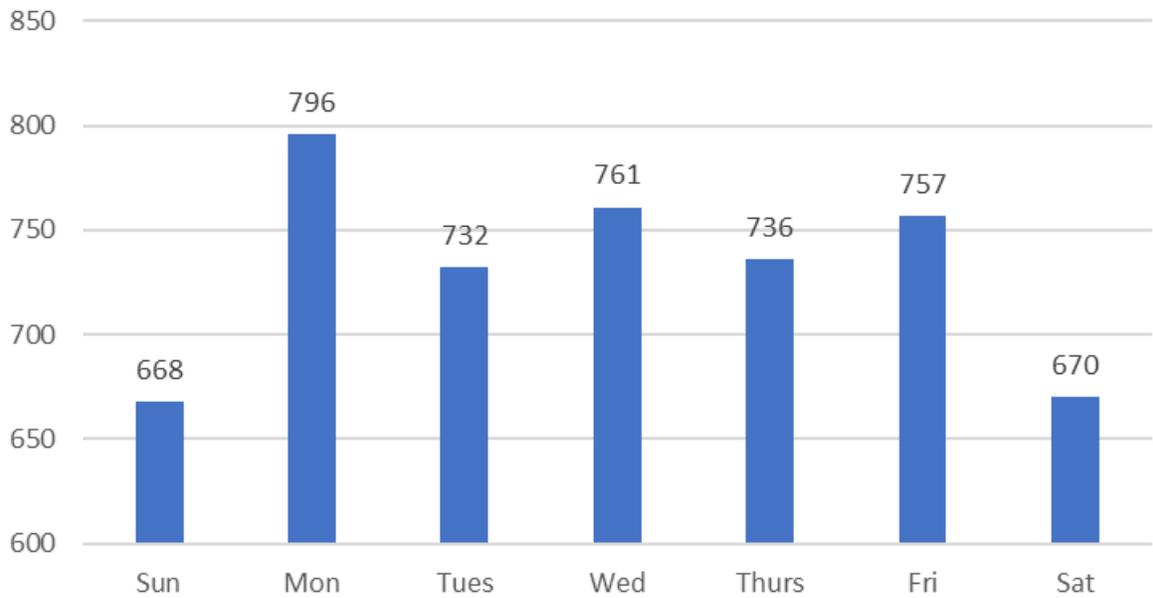
6 Year Trends in Franklin Fire Department Service Delivery by Calendar Year:

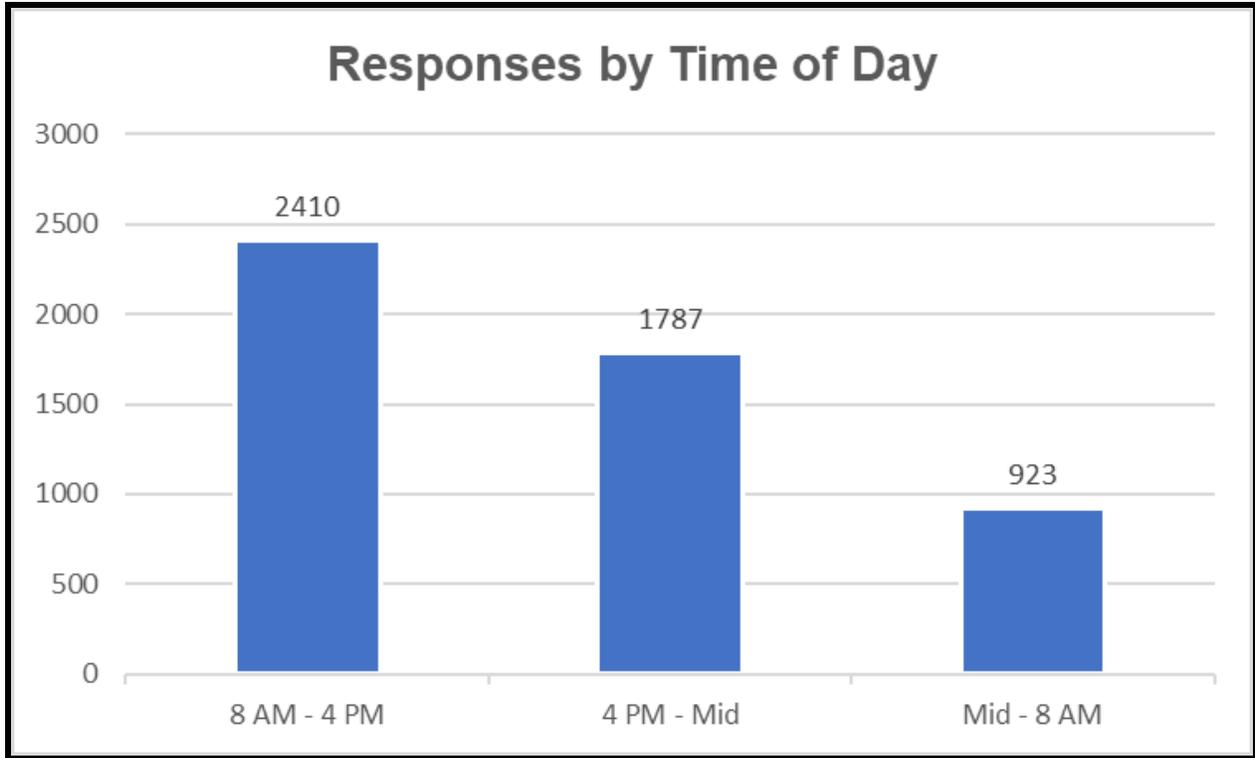
<b>Call Type</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
EMS and Rescue Calls	3083	3269	2,952	2,757	3,313	3,549
Fire Emergencies	63	63	55	72	67	95
Hazardous Conditions	126	186	135	213	111	140
Service Calls	390	458	767	753	727	685
False Alarms	510	641	617	608	645	648
Severe Weather	2	11	4	27	14	3
<b>Total Number of Responses</b>	<b>4174</b>	<b>4,628</b>	<b>4,530</b>	<b>4,430</b>	<b>4,877</b>	<b>5,120</b>
<b>% +/- from Previous Year</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>+ 10.88</b>	<b>- 2.12</b>	<b>- 2.2</b>	<b>+ 10.1</b>	<b>+ 4.98</b>

## 2022 Breakdown of Fire Department Calls by Type



## Responses by Day of Week





DEPARTMENT: FIRE		FUNCTION: PUBLIC SAFETY			DEPT #: 220		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	5,690,085	5,891,440	6,111,027	6,529,173	6,529,173	-	
EXPENSES	458,255	503,807	563,063	729,000	729,000	-	
<b>TOTAL FIRE :</b>	<b>\$6,148,340</b>	<b>\$6,395,247</b>	<b>\$6,674,090</b>	<b>\$7,258,173</b>	<b>\$7,258,173</b>	<b>-</b>	

REGIONAL DISPATCH

General Purpose/Mission Statement:

The Towns of Franklin, Wrentham, Norfolk, Plainville, Mendon and Millville (In FY21 the Mendon-Millville Regional Center signed a merger with the MECC to consolidate costs. After this merger, the MECC still has additional capacity for another 10-20,000 inn population) have joined together to establish a regional district to operate and maintain a consolidated District-wide public safety communications/dispatch center that will be known as the Metacomet Emergency Communications Center (MECC).

The MECC has a Board of Directors which shall serve as the governing and administrative body and will have overall responsibility for the District. The District employs a MECC Director who has overall responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the MECC and will serve as the Chief Administrative and Fiscal Officer.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

There is an Operations Committee that comprises the Chiefs of the Fire and Police Departments (or their designee) of each member town.

**Staffing:**

- 4 full-time administrative personnel
- 16 full-time Dispatchers
- Part-time dispatchers

**Strategic Initiatives:**

- Visit the MECC Website HERE - <https://www.meccd Dispatch.org/>

DEPARTMENT: REGIONAL DISPATCH	FUNCTION: PUBLIC SAFETY			DEPT #: 225		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels		
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final
EXPENSES	447,355	435,074	610,664	958,670	958,670	-
<b>TOTAL REGIONAL DISPATCH :</b>	<b>\$447,355</b>	<b>\$435,074</b>	<b>\$610,664</b>	<b>\$958,670</b>	<b>\$958,670</b>	-

### BUILDING & INSPECTIONS DEPARTMENT

**General Purpose/Mission Statement:**

The Building Inspection Department’s mission statement is to ensure the Massachusetts State building, plumbing and gas codes as well as 521 CMR Architectural Access Board Regulations and the Town of Franklin Zoning Bylaws are enforced. The department provides all the necessary inspections required to enforce these codes and bylaws. The Department also protects the residential and business community through required building permits and periodic business inspections.

**Building Commissioner’s Core Functions:**

- Review all submitted applications, issue permits and conduct required inspections.
- Conduct field inspections for all issued permits.
- Follow up on all zoning inquiries.
- Administration, enforcement and interpretation of the Franklin Zoning Bylaws.
- Work with other departments within Franklin’s Government
- Inspect town projects
- Administration of the Sealer of Weights & Measures currently conducted by the state.
- Provide emergency services for disaster response such as the Fire Department or Emergency Management.
- Conduct periodic inspections for places of assembly for common victualer and liquor licenses.

Staffing:

- 3 full-time employees
- 1 part-time administrative employee
- 2 part-time inspectors
- 4 intermittent, as needed inspectors

Goals Achieved:

- All inspection requests are logged in online.
- All inspections are being conducted in the field.
- Ongoing online permit submissions are proceeding without a glitch.
- Weights and Measures are billed online.
- Inspectors and staff are educated daily on important changes.
- All inspectors issue their respective trade permits, unassisted!

FY23 was another great year for the Building & Inspections Department. Our inspectors in the field have shown that they continue to operate at a high level. Their issuance of permits have become second nature with a focus on enforcement with a splash of administrative expertise that would rival any town in the commonwealth. The complicated problems they encounter are handled with poise and fairness with a focus on troubleshooting rather than “it’s not my problem.” It’s Building Commissioner Gus Brown’s goal to spend more time listening to their daily experiences and offering suggestions that improve relations with the public and staff. Additionally, the Commissioner and recently hired Administrative Assistant Maureen Canesi have spent copious amounts of time training. Maureen has already proven to be a great addition to the team.

Strategic Initiatives:

- The Habitable Housing Task Force has helped take a bite out of the vacant property dilemma that we all have worked so hard on and will continue to do so.
- Stretch Code training continues and education seminars are being held at the Franklin Town Hall on a monthly basis.
- Continuing Education through our CEU requirements along with state and local requirements.
- Maureen Canesi has analyzed our Building Department Website and has offered suggestions on a revamp to make it more user friendly with adding drop down menus as an initial change.
- Become more involved with adding ways to alleviate the Sealer of Weights and Measures challenge.
- Continue to look at the budget and add to the savings that we have already accomplished through our savings on office supplies.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

Our Strategic Initiatives will continue at the high level the Town of Franklin has expected from us, always digging for the latest in technology that allows streamlining. Our online databases have proven to us that we have only scratched the surface and training will continue.

DEPARTMENT: INSPECTION DEPARTMENT		FUNCTION: PUBLIC SAFETY			DEPT #: 240		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	384,784	430,314	370,990	432,336	432,336	-	
EXPENSES	16,269	19,055	22,712	14,512	14,512	-	
<b>TOTAL INSPECTION DEPARTMENT :</b>	<b>\$401,053</b>	<b>\$449,369</b>	<b>\$393,702</b>	<b>\$446,848</b>	<b>\$446,848</b>	-	

**ANIMAL CONTROL**

General Purpose/Mission Statement:

The Animal Control department is responsible for the control and keeping of stray dogs and animals. It helps return these animals to the owner at all costs. The enforcement of laws pertaining to the licensing and control of dogs falls under the jurisdiction of the department. The Animal Control Officer also serves as the Inspector of Animals who is responsible for the same. This service is regionalized with the Town of Bellingham and offers 24/7 coverage.

DEPARTMENT: ANIMAL CONTROL		FUNCTION: PUBLIC SAFETY			DEPT #: 292		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
EXPENSES	74,694	76,386	80,700	92,700	92,700	-	
<b>TOTAL ANIMAL CONTROL :</b>	<b>\$74,694</b>	<b>\$76,386</b>	<b>\$80,700</b>	<b>\$92,700</b>	<b>\$92,700</b>	-	

# EDUCATION

## FRANKLIN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

### General Purpose/Mission Statement:

The Franklin Public Schools serve 4,711 students in Pre-K through grade 12 and in some post-graduate programs. In FY24, there will be one integrated preschool, five elementary schools, three middle schools, and one high school. Franklin Public Schools students achieve at high levels in academics, fine and performing arts, athletics, and in many extracurricular endeavors. Franklin Public Schools administrators, faculty, and staff are committed to providing a safe and inclusive school community to every student and family.

This budget continues to support Franklin’s [Portrait of a Graduate](#) -- the community’s consensus of five essential skills each student will practice and develop through their PreK-12+ school experience. We remain focused on supporting student growth, recovery, and success and will continue to prioritize services and supports for our students who continue to experience disruptions due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Our budget aligns with the district’s strategic objectives:

1. Support the Social-Emotional Well-being of Students and Staff	2. Provide Engaging and Rigorous Curriculum	3. Deliver High-Quality Instruction to Meet the Academic and SEL Needs of Each Learner	4. Engage in Effective Two-Way Communication to Support Student Learning	5. Affirm Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for All Students
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Please see the [Executive Summary for the Franklin Public School Districts’ Approved FY24 Budget on our Budget Webpage](#).

The Superintendent's FY24 budget presentation, as approved by the School Committee [is here](#).

For more information on the Franklin Public Schools, please contact the Superintendent’s Office at 508-553-4819.

DEPARTMENT: FRANKLIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS	FUNCTION: EDUCATION			DEPT #: 300		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels		
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final
EXPENSES	64,862,879	67,180,085	70,220,825	71,252,779	71,252,779	-
<b>TOTAL FRANKLIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS :</b>	<b>\$64,862,879</b>	<b>\$67,180,085</b>	<b>\$70,220,825</b>	<b>\$71,252,779</b>	<b>\$71,252,779</b>	-

TRI COUNTY REGIONAL VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

General Purpose/Mission Statement:

The Tri-County Regional Vocational School District was established by an act of the Massachusetts legislature on September 26, 1973. The act designated the towns of Franklin, Medfield, Medway, Millis, Norfolk, North Attleboro, Sherborn, and Walpole as the original members; they were joined shortly after by the towns of Plainville, Seekonk and Wrentham. The school district was established in accordance with MGL Chapter 71 and as part of the agreement to establish the district, Tri-County was established under the provisions of MGL Chapter 74 and designated to include courses beyond the secondary school level in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 74 Section 37A. The Town has two (2) appointed members to the Regional School Committee.

Tri-County Regional Vocational High School is still housed in its original building. In September of 1977, Tri-County opened its doors to a freshman and sophomore class and saw its first graduation in 1980. In its third year of operation, the school began offering its first postsecondary program in the field of Cosmetology and it is still in operation.

The academic program offers a broadly based comprehensive education through a highly structured core curriculum. The emphasis of this component is on applications involving communication, mathematics, science, and social studies. College preparatory instruction is included for those students who may opt for this direction. Through a combination of ability grouping and heterogeneous grouping, students are prepared to enter today's job market and are taught that education is a lifelong process. In today's changing workplace, our students are prepared to continue learning throughout their work life.

The Career Programs offered at Tri-County are broad enough in scope to appeal to almost any student. Instruction is offered in a variety of technologies by teachers who are experienced and, when appropriate, licensed in the field they teach. This allows instructors to teach practical hands-on skills as well as the theory behind the application.

Tri-County's mission is to provide an excellent comprehensive technical and academic education to regional high school students. State-of-the-art technical skills and knowledge are enriched and complemented by a solid foundation of academic skills. Creative and cooperative partnerships between area employers and a dynamic staff at Tri-County guarantee the continued growth and development of exciting programs designed to prepare graduates for careers in the twenty-first century. This is a place where students succeed and are well-prepared for work or college.

The FY24 enrollment at Tri-County is estimated at 935 students; 164 are from Franklin. The budget reflects the cost sharing agreement between the towns and the member assessments based on the annual enrollment from Franklin.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

On March 1, 2023 the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) approved the Tri-County Regional Vocational High School District, as part of its invitation for Feasibility Study, to proceed into Schematic Design to replace the existing Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School with a new facility on the site of the existing school. The next step is for the MSBA to work in collaboration with the school district to produce detailed designs for a potential project. The District anticipates seeking community approval from member communities for the proposed new building project in October 2023. The project is estimated to cost \$279 million. The Tri-county Regional Vocational Technical High School Building Committee held interviews for the Construction Manager at Risk on March 23, 2023. The District will be preparing design and construction schedules for submission to the MSBA.

DEPARTMENT: TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL SCHOOL		FUNCTION: EDUCATION			DEPT #: 390		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
EXPENSES	2,504,543	2,449,637	2,540,198	2,775,000	2,775,000	-	
<b>TOTAL TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL SCHOOL :</b>	<b>\$2,504,543</b>	<b>\$2,449,637</b>	<b>\$2,540,198</b>	<b>\$2,775,000</b>	<b>\$2,775,000</b>	-	

**NORFOLK COUNTY AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL**

**GENERAL PURPOSE/MISSION STATEMENT:**

Norfolk County Agricultural High School (NCAHS) is a public high school that offers academic and vocational training to over 500 students from the 27 towns and one city in Norfolk County and more than 40 out of county (tuition) towns. The school is situated on 365 acres in Walpole, a suburb of Boston, and offers specialty training to students who are interested in pursuing careers in Animal and Marine Science (veterinarian science, marine science, canine science, dairy and livestock management, research animal technology and equine studies), Plant and Plant Science (forestry, floriculture, landscape management, horticulture and natural resources, arboriculture and turf management), Environmental Science (climate change, natural resources, green engineering, environmental history, parks and recreation, new england wildlife, outdoor leadership, water treatment) and Mechanical Technology (diesel and heavy equipment operation and repair, welding woodworking). The school is one of four such schools in Massachusetts charged with promoting agri-science and agri-business opportunities.

Norfolk Aggie provides hands-on education in a welcoming and friendly environment and provides many clubs, sports and outdoor activities for the students. For more information about the Norfolk Agricultural School please visit <http://www.norfolkaggie.org>

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

DEPARTMENT: NORFOLK AGGIE VOC ED TUITION		FUNCTION: EDUCATION			DEPT #: 395		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
EXPENSES	24,888	29,468	66,660	66,660	66,660	-	
<b>TOTAL NORFOLK AGGIE VOC ED TUITION :</b>	<b>\$24,888</b>	<b>\$29,468</b>	<b>\$66,660</b>	<b>\$66,660</b>	<b>\$66,660</b>	-	

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

### DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

#### General Purpose/Mission Statement:

Use the highest standards of customer service and efficient use of Town resources and meet the public infrastructure needs of the Town of Franklin.

#### Overall Departmental Service Goals:

- Customer Service – continually improve procedures to meet Town standards for customer service. Proactively anticipate customer needs. Explore increased use of technology such as on-line bill payment.
- Management and Administration – continuously evaluate means and methods of service delivery, evaluate, and where applicable, implement best practices. Lead in technology implementation for DPWs.
- Infrastructure Planning – participate in general growth planning and lead in planning to meet future infrastructure needs resulting from Town growth. Monitor water system master plan to reflect the impact of improvements initiated to date. Evaluate the need for sewer/stormwater master plan reflective of recent DEP policies.
- Infrastructure Design and Construction – ensure public infrastructure design and construction, whether by public or private parties, meets Town and professional standards, results in cost effective projects and minimizes environmental and neighborhood impacts.
- Public Infrastructure Maintenance – proactively maintain all DPW-assigned public infrastructure assets and support equipment to meet service requirements.
- Emergency Response – be in a position to respond to major and minor emergencies to restore and maintain services.

#### General Department Overview:

- Director of Public Works
  - Develop and maintain relationships with state and federal agencies for permitting and regulatory compliance.
  - Long range infrastructure planning.
  - Resource development, including improving efficiency, acquiring grants, development of support facilities, coordination of divisions, etc.
  - Annual planning, budgeting, setting goals, program evaluation.
  - EPA MS4 Stormwater Phase II Plan implementation.
  - Evaluate all new technologies: GPS, Watersmart, ArcGIS, Fleetio Software, etc, throughout the organization to improve efficiency and reduce costs.
  - Continue to work with other communities to share resources.
- Administration

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- Administration of water, sewer, sprinkler, hydrant, cross-connection, backflow, solid waste & recycling, and stormwater billing.
- Customer Service: counter and telephone intake, public notifications, etc.
- Permit processing (water/sewer/street excavation/public way access, drain layers licenses, etc.).
- DPW-wide financial management, including payroll, AP/AR, and purchasing.
- Support to operating divisions.
- Engineering and Construction Division
  - Manage design and construction of capital improvement projects, coordinating with operating divisions.
  - Review site plans and subdivision plans for the Planning Board and Conservation Commission.
  - Provide construction inspection for municipal capital projects and work in the public right of way.
  - Manage street excavation and trench bylaws.
  - Maintain official Town records and map.
- Highway Division (includes Grounds, Park & Tree, Central Motors, Snow Operations, Beaver Street Recycling Center and Street Lighting):
  - Road Maintenance - Reclaiming, overlay, chip seal, crack sealing, infraredding, and patching
  - Sidewalks – Repair existing sidewalks and add new sidewalks where needed.
  - Grounds, Parks & Tree – Plant trees, maintain public shade trees, cut grass at ball fields, buildings, islands and cemetery and cut, prune and trim shrubs around schools, municipal buildings and the Town Common.
  - Central Motors – Maintenance of approximately 165 Town vehicles, including DPW, Inspection, Board of Health, Council on Aging, Police , School), Fire); approximately 41 trailers and small equipment such as weed wackers, lawn mowers, chain saws, snow blowers, snow plows and sanders.
  - Snow Plowing & Sanding Operation
  - Beaver Street Recycling Station – Operation of a Recycling Station 3.5 days a week that is customer friendly and meets all D.E.P. regulations.
  - Street Lighting - Repair and maintain street lights throughout town.

### Staffing:

Note: Administration and Clerical are shared with Enterprise funds. The following staffing reflects what is paid from the operating budget. See Enterprise Funds for Water, Sewer, Stormwater and Solid Waste.

- Administration - 2.75 FTE
- Clerical - 0.70 FTE
- Highway Division Labor – 8.0
- Parks and Trees Labor – 6.0
- Central Motors Labor – 3.4
- Recycling Center Staff - 1.8

### Strategic Initiatives:

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- Provide exceptional and expedient customer service to every person who contacts the Public Works Department.
- Continue to develop and implement plans and oversight of all Public Works projects that meet safety concerns while ensuring protection of staff and residents.
- Maintain the Town's assets, such as fields, Town Common and other public ways in the community with the most cost effective use of resources whether public or private.
- Continue to work on the storm water challenge and funding of the requirements of the MS4 permit. Public Works continues to proactively work on this issue with the installation of rain gardens, improved road design and many other projects that help manage this costly endeavor going forward.
- Maintained excellence in snow and ice removal operations.
- Execute several miles of new water and roadway projects.
- Implement, evaluate and fund to the extent possible the Town's 5-year Pavement Management Plan. The Town has a whopping \$40 million in backlogged road work and millions more required to maintain our parking lots.

### **FY24 Budget Modifications, Increases & Reductions**

The DPW budget will include a major change in FY24 due to the adoption of a fully operational and funded Stormwater Enterprise Fund beginning July 1, 2023. With this change, all stormwater costs and the costs related to the federally mandated MS4 permit, will be moved out of the DPW General Fund and into a self-sustaining Stormwater Enterprise Fund. This will reduce budgetary pressures, allowing public works to begin to rebuild some of the areas where cuts were made over the past several years.

Besides the impacts from the addition of the stormwater utility, the majority of changes to our budget were made to accommodate rising costs due to inflation, to add back funding to areas that were decreased in past years, to build up our road maintenance budget, and to increase our snow budget to reflect costs going forward and to create a built in snow reserve.

The following list outlines the major changes in the Franklin Public Works Budget that are needed so we can continue to meet the needs of our residents and address changes in regulatory requirements and staffing concerns next year. The majority of changes are shifting funds to areas that are of a higher priority.

Overall, the DPW General Fund budget went up by \$234,800. This includes a decrease of \$97,000 on the salary side and an increase of \$347,000 in expense items.

The most significant changes to our salary budget are increasing our snow overtime budget by \$50,000 and adding a Fleet Manager to our Central Motors Department. The highlights of other salary changes includes, required payroll step, COLA, and stipend increases due to contractual obligations with our crew, increases from the salary survey completed in FY23, and COLA increases for non-union staff. We will also see a reduction of approximately \$269,000 with the movement of the Stormwater salaries into the Stormwater Enterprise Fund.

The majority of the changes to the DPW expenditure line items were made due to rising costs from inflation for supplies and materials as well as outside contracts and services. Beyond that, the additional funding available due to moving stormwater costs out of the DPW budget allowed us to add back \$525,000 of funding to our

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

road maintenance line item, which had been dramatically cut and underfunded for many years. This will allow us to complete much needed road repairs and maintenance.

Additionally, we increased supplies and services line items as needed and made slight cuts in other areas to alleviate the budget impact where possible. Specifically, we had increases to supplies and materials budgets for highway traffic signals, schools & grounds, and an increase of \$50,000 to the fuel budget due to the uncertainty of fuel costs going forward. Through February of FY23, we paid an average price per gallon of \$4.42 for diesel and \$ 3.23 for regular unleaded. With our estimated annual fuel use at 35,000 gallons of diesel and 75,000 gallons of regular, our budget requests for fuel would support costs up to \$4.50/ gallon for diesel and \$3.75/ gallon for regular. We will be keeping a close eye on the market trends.

**Average Fuel Costs DPW FY20-FY24 projected**

Fiscal Year	Avg \$/ Gallon with Tax		Actual Total Fuel Costs			
	Diesel	Regular 87	Central Motors	Snow & Ice	School Vans	Total Cost Fuel
FY20	\$ 2.38	\$ 2.08	\$ 155,870	\$ 33,976	\$ 20,001	<b>\$ 209,846</b>
FY21	\$ 2.39	\$ 2.08	\$ 164,857	\$ 43,625	\$ 18,034	<b>\$ 226,516</b>
FY22	\$ 2.61	\$ 2.77	\$ 210,363	\$ 48,247	\$ 33,390	<b>\$ 292,000</b>
FY23 projected	\$ 4.42	\$ 3.23	\$ 314,428	\$ 34,169	\$ 40,212	<b>\$ 388,808</b>
FY24 projected	\$ 4.50	\$ 3.75	\$ 350,000	\$ 55,000	\$ 45,000	<b>\$ 450,000</b>

We have also requested increases to various outside services budgets such as school and field maintenance, traffic light repairs and recycle center materials disposal, as inflation is affecting these areas as well.

Although we have seen many of our DPW divisions' costs rising, the Street Lights Divisions costs have declined significantly since FY18/19 when the town switched over to LED lighting in our street lights. This project was funded with Town capital funds and multiple grants; the Green Communities Grant, National Grid Grant, and a Department of Energy Rebate Program.

With this energy efficient upgrade, we have been able to significantly reduce our use of electricity and reduce our maintenance costs. Not only has this saved the town money, but we are using more environmentally friendly fixtures that reduce light pollution and are safer for the environment.

Since we moved over to LED lighting in 2019, costs have dropped dramatically as seen in the chart below. In FY23, although we are still using less electricity, the “cost/ unit” of electricity has increased, so our expenditures have ticked up a bit this fiscal year. However, we still expect to be under our budget of \$65,000 this year and plan to maintain this budget level in FY24.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

<b>Street Lighting Electricity &amp; Maintenance Costs/ Year</b>	
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
FY24 projected	\$65,000
FY23 projected	\$53,998
FY22	\$37,778
FY21	\$32,760
FY20	\$111,033
FY19	\$141,164
FY18	\$171,291
FY17	\$142,113

<b>FY23 Snow &amp; Ice Report</b>	
FY23 Approved Budget	\$1,056,500
FY23 Budget Allocated towards road treatments/salt	\$418,000
<b>FY23 Actual Costs</b>	
Number of Snow/weather-related events	18
Approx. inches of snow	13.5"
Total Costs - FY23	\$550,577
Cost for salt - FY23	\$269,706
Amount of salt used	3,413 tons

**Snow & Ice Spending History:**

<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY 2019</b>	<b>FY 2020</b>	<b>FY 2021</b>	<b>FY 2022</b>	<b>FY2023</b>
\$1,182,021	\$1,432,100	\$712,347	\$1,031,929	\$1,135,327	\$1,001,273	\$679,597	\$1,078,789	\$1,285,669	\$550,577

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS		FUNCTION: DPW - MULTIPLE			DEPT #: 422		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	548,256	438,968	647,816	668,104	668,104	-	
EXPENSES	531,069	665,130	545,100	1,095,100	1,095,100	-	
<b>TOTAL DPW/HIGHWAY</b>	<b>1,079,325</b>	<b>1,104,098</b>	<b>1,192,916</b>	<b>1,763,204</b>	<b>1,763,204</b>	-	
PERSONAL SERVICES	435,700	415,680	555,210	560,477	560,477	-	
EXPENSES	529,219	512,808	516,750	563,251	563,251	-	
<b>TOTAL DPW/PARK &amp; TREE</b>	<b>964,919</b>	<b>928,388</b>	<b>1,071,960</b>	<b>1,123,728</b>	<b>1,123,728</b>	-	
PERSONAL SERVICES	221,641	198,578	203,000	255,000	255,000	-	
EXPENSES	857,148	1,088,736	853,500	1,217,500	1,217,500	-	
<b>TOTAL DPW/SNOW &amp; ICE</b>	<b>1,078,789</b>	<b>1,285,313</b>	<b>1,056,500</b>	<b>1,472,500</b>	<b>1,472,500</b>	-	
PERSONAL SERVICES	181,128	189,056	209,133	272,169	272,169	-	
EXPENSES	531,413	498,403	667,900	713,500	713,500	-	
<b>TOTAL DPW/CENTRAL MOTORS</b>	<b>712,541</b>	<b>687,459</b>	<b>877,033</b>	<b>985,669</b>	<b>985,669</b>	-	
PERSONAL SERVICES	59,628	73,438	87,142	89,492	89,492	-	
EXPENSES	99,296	102,889	133,000	149,000	149,000	-	
<b>TOTAL DPW/RECYCLING</b>	<b>158,925</b>	<b>176,326</b>	<b>220,142</b>	<b>238,492</b>	<b>238,492</b>	-	
PERSONAL SERVICES	275,146	162,140	193,587	207,875	207,875	-	
EXPENSES	210,938	115,689	211,300	213,300	213,300	-	
<b>TOTAL DPW/ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>486,084</b>	<b>277,829</b>	<b>404,887</b>	<b>421,175</b>	<b>421,175</b>	-	
PERSONAL SERVICES	2,982	224,097	269,914	-	-	-	
EXPENSES	-	318,533	677,000	-	-	-	
<b>TOTAL DPW/STORMWATER</b>	<b>2,982</b>	<b>542,630</b>	<b>946,914</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	-	
EXPENSES	-	-	65,000	65,000	65,000	-	
<b>TOTAL DPW/STREET LIGHT</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>65,000</b>	<b>65,000</b>	<b>65,000</b>	-	
PERSONAL SERVICES	1,724,482	1,701,856.80	2,165,802.00	2,053,117	2,053,117	-	
EXPENSES	2,759,083	3,300,186.88	3,669,550.00	4,016,651	4,016,651	-	
<b>FUNCTION TOTAL: DPW - MULTIPLE</b>	<b>\$4,483,566</b>	<b>\$5,002,044</b>	<b>\$5,835,352</b>	<b>\$6,069,768</b>	<b>\$6,069,768</b>	-	

## HUMAN SERVICES

### HEALTH DEPARTMENT

#### General Purpose/Mission Statement:

The Franklin Health Department is required by state, local laws and regulations to perform many critical duties related to the protection of public health. These duties cover a wide range of public health control and prevention activities, including: disease surveillance; the promotion of sanitary conditions in housing, recreational facilities, and food establishments; elimination of nuisances; the protection of the environment; and numerous other responsibilities that include the following.

#### FOOD SERVICE

The Health Department conducts bi-annual inspections of 130 food service establishments and retail food establishments (convenience stores) yearly. Each establishment receives a routine inspection and a follow up re-inspection subsequent to the original inspection. Not included in this number are complaint related inspections, and suspect food-borne illness investigations. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health requires all health departments to submit comprehensive inspection reports and illness worksheets for all suspect cases. The Health Department staff also must inspect and permit mobile food trucks and other seasonal and temporary food events throughout the year.

#### TOBACCO CONTROL

In December of 2019, legislation was passed signing into law An Act Modernizing Tobacco Control with additional authority to regulate access to tobacco and electronic delivery systems, including vaping. The new law placed restrictions on retail stores licensed to sell tobacco products. The enforcement authority for these new restrictions is on the health department. In 2023, the health department permitted 23 retail stores and smoke shops. The Board of Health is currently reviewing the 2023 Sales Regulation restricting the sale of tobacco and vape products to incorporate these minimum standards required pursuant to Massachusetts state law and regulations into the current board of regulations.

#### SEPTIC SYSTEM INSTALLATIONS

The Health Department is required to review all engineered plans for proposed septic system installations, upgrades and repairs to be in compliance with State Regulations. The Health Department has contracted with a septic consultant to review and approve all engineered plans and to monitor the progress of these installations by conducting a series of site inspections. The permitting process for septic installers continues to be done through the Health Department.

## PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE/EPIDEMIOLOGIST

The public health nurse has done contact tracing for hundreds of positive COVID 19 cases and worked with the school nurses, along with numerous businesses, to provide guidance on contact tracing, isolation and quarantine guidelines. Other public health nurse duties include but are not limited to communicable disease reporting and conducting blood pressure and glucose clinics. The Public Health Nurse conducted multiple trainings, including hands only CPR, stop the bleed, first aid and medical emergencies and other educational trainings. Trainings were held at the senior center, housing authority and the Tri-County school of nursing program. The public health nurse is a member of the student health and wellness advisory council and the Massachusetts Association of Public Health Nurses.

The Epidemiologist is a grant driven position funded by the Metacomet Public Health Excellence Award. The Epidemiologist implemented the COVID 19 Dashboard located on the Health Department website that is maintained weekly. The Epidemiologist partnered with the GIS Specialist to create the Healthcare Resources and Services dashboard. The dashboard provides maps and charts of healthcare services and covers 29 health topics on healthy risk behaviors, prevention and health status. The Epidemiologist also conducts surveillance and case management of communicable diseases.

## HOUSING CODE ENFORCEMENT

The Health Department enforces the State Sanitary Code, Minimum Standards of Fitness and Human Habitation and is mandated to investigate all complaints of unsanitary or substandard living conditions of dwellings. The Health Department formed a Habitable Housing Task Force that is comprised of the building, fire and police staff along with the Attorney General's Office for assistance with the Abandoned Housing Initiative. Inspections of abandoned buildings take place when needed and Order to Correct letters and are generated to move towards bringing the abandoned buildings up to minimum standards to eliminate blight within the community.

## NUISANCE/ODOR/NOISE COMPLAINTS

The Health Department has the responsibility for investigating all reports of public health nuisances, which can include but are not limited to refuse, noxious odors, overgrown vegetation and stagnant water.

In addition to the above-mentioned primary responsibilities, the following is a list of additional departmental functions:

- Permitting and inspection of public pools and spas
- Permitting and inspection of recreational camps
- Permitting and inspection of tanning establishment
- Permitting and inspection of mobile food trucks
- Permitting and inspection of body art facilities
- Permitting and inspection of bodyworks facilities

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- Process renewal applications yearly
- Process plan reviews for all establishments as submitted

All public swimming pools and spas receive both annual and regularly scheduled inspections by the Health Department. Improper sanitation and maintenance of public pools and spas has resulted in serious disease outbreaks and injuries. Presently the town has five year round pools, four hot tubs and fifteen seasonal pools that require inspections.

Recreational camps for children require an intensive review process by local Health Departments prior to issuance of a permit to operate. All campers' immunization records must be reviewed thoroughly for required vaccinations by the public health nurse. The facility also requires a detailed inspection for compliance with all state regulations. Most recently the Health Department permitted 10 recreational camps for children.

### Accomplishments in 2023:

- Organized and held a flu clinic at the Senior Center and vaccinated 90 individuals
- Public health nurse partnered with the food pantry to mobilize the food pantry mobile truck to provide food to the housing authority residents monthly
- Continue to participate in doing educational podcasts
- Continue with the health department podcast to discuss public health issues
- Have engaged in a shared service grant with Wrentham and Norfolk enabling the health department to have a regional inspector and an epidemiologist on site
- Built a Health Resource & Services community dashboard on the Health Department website
- Implemented a food waste program for Franklin Public Schools

### Staffing:

- 4 full-time employees
- 1 Title 5 contractor
- 1 grant contracted Regional Environmental Inspector
- 1 grant contracted Epidemiologist

### Strategic Initiatives:

- Organize and implement a spring health fair with the library
- Implement a food insecurity program with the food Pantry and public school
- Partner with Dean College to implement an academic public health partnership
- Build additional community dashboards on GIS to provide guidance of services for residents
- Engage municipal staff in public health nursing trainings
- Implement a community homeless campaign

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

DEPARTMENT: BOARD OF HEALTH		FUNCTION: HUMAN SERVICES			DEPT #: 510		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	170,446	205,244	270,985	294,711	294,711	-	
EXPENSES	33,604	38,175	48,400	48,400	48,400	-	
<b>TOTAL BOARD OF HEALTH :</b>	<b>\$204,049</b>	<b>\$243,419</b>	<b>\$319,385</b>	<b>\$343,111</b>	<b>\$343,111</b>	<b>-</b>	

**COUNCIL ON AGING / SENIOR CENTER**

**General Purpose/Mission Statement:**

The mission of the Franklin Council on Aging is to enhance the independence and quality of life for Franklin’s older adults by identifying the needs of this population and creating programs that meet those needs, offering the knowledge, tools, and opportunities to promote mental, social, and physical well-being, advocating for relevant programs and services, and serving as a community focal point for aging issues and as a liaison to local, state, and federal agencies that serve older adults and their families.

Our goal is to offer a variety of community services as well as opportunities for enhancing the quality of life for our aging population and residents with disabilities and their families by:

- Advancing safety and wellness through prevention, health screening, and nutrition and fitness opportunities.
- Fostering social engagement through socialization, intergenerational programs, and volunteer opportunities.
- Promoting independence by providing extensive support services.
- Improving economic security through education, information, and outreach.

**COA Programs:**

The Franklin Senior Center offers a wide range of programs, services, and activities that serve older adults, individuals with disabilities, and non-elderly residents. We also serve younger residents and residents with disabilities by providing assistance with accessing social services through our Social Services Coordinator. We offer the following programs, services, and activities:

- Offer affordable, nutritious meals at the Common Grounds Café along with the opportunity for older adults to socialize and volunteer.
- Provide health and wellness programs and services; e.g., blood pressure and blood sugar screening, fall prevention, balance screening and classes, flu vaccine clinics, podiatry clinics, home safety evaluations and adaptation, low vision services, fitness programs, health education and support groups.
- Offer a Supportive Adult Day Program (The Sunshine Club), which provides a structured, supervised and stimulating environment for elders with mild to moderate dementia or cognitive decline, and those who are socially isolated. The program also offers a bi-weekly Caregivers Support Group for caregivers in our community.

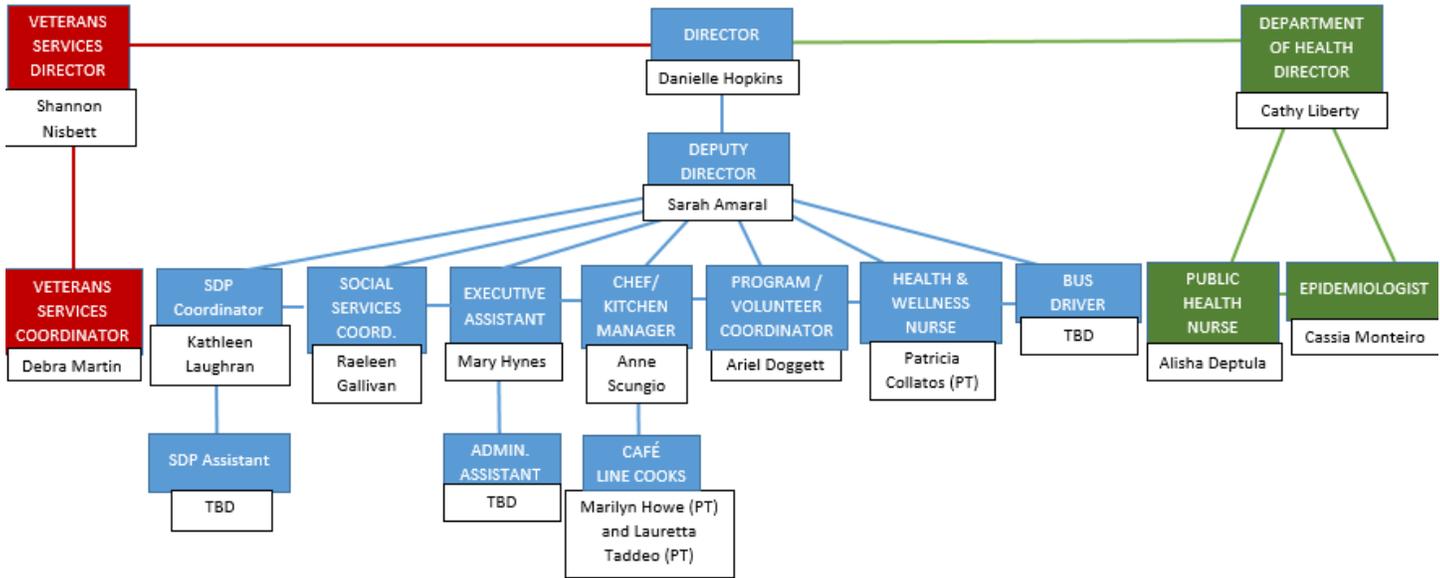
## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- Provide Social Service Coordination to elderly, low-income and residents with disabilities by accessing social benefit programs; e.g., fuel assistance, prescription drug programs, food stamps, Mass Health, housing, income support, etc. Home visits are also provided to offer assistance to frail, homebound elderly or disabled residents.
- Offer specialized Assistive Technology training and supportive programming to vision and hearing impaired individuals to help these elders maintain their independence and improve their quality of life.
- Offer Mental Health Counseling through EMHOT (Emergency Mental Health Outreach Team) to elders through individual and group sessions.
- Offer social and recreational programming, including but not limited to themed social events and recreational activities such as cribbage, scrabble, Bingo, bridge, whist, Mah-jongg, arts & crafts, chess, painting, quilting, knitting, pool, woodcarving, movies, flower-arranging, a chorale group and recreational trips at low or no cost.
- Offer educational programming, including but not limited to health and wellness programs, history lectures, financial and legal concerns, as well as some continuing education through language classes, technology classes, discussion forums, etc.
- Offer health insurance benefits counseling through the SHINE (Serving the Health Information Needs of Everyone) program, which provides assistance with health and prescription drug insurance problems and questions regarding benefits.
- Provide professional services and amenities such as Hairdresser, Barber, Manicures, Fitness Equipment, Legal Advice, Tax Preparation Assistance, medical equipment loans and a Gift Shop for our members' convenience.
- Offer Intergenerational programs with students from the Early Child Development Center, Oak Street Elementary School, Horace Mann, the Parmenter School, the Franklin High School, Xaverian Brothers High School, the Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter School, Tri-County Regional Vocational High School and Dean College.
- Publish a monthly newsletter, *The Senior Connection*, which is mailed to over 1,000 senior citizen households in Franklin and to numerous on-line subscribers. The newsletter offers information about programs, services, and activities, as well as health education and information and relevant topics. We also host a Facebook page, Twitter account and Instagram page.
- Administer the Senior Citizen Property Tax Work-Off Program in collaboration with the Assessor's and Treasurer's Departments. The program provides tax credits to seniors who work in various town departments.
- Provide Income Tax Preparation Assistance to residents through a partnership with AARP, which provides volunteers to prepare income tax returns for elders.
- Provide volunteer opportunities to residents who offer assistance in our gift shop, Café, Supportive Day Program, as instructors and in other capacities.
- Facilitate handicapped accessible transportation by working with GATRA and Tri-Valley Elder Services to address issues and problems as well as planning for upcoming events.
- Provide grab bar installation opportunities for 2 homes a month

Staffing:

- 10 full-time employees
- 3 part-time employees

## Franklin Senior Center Organizational Chart



**FY23 and FY24 Strategic Initiatives:**

The Franklin Senior Center throughout FY23 has seen much success, having a significant increase in participation, signing up around 600 new members in calendar year 2022. In addition, the programming offered has more than doubled in opportunities introducing more fitness classes, evening programming, art classes, health and wellness programs, technology assistance, support groups, LGBTQ+ inclusive programming, and more.

A main goal of the Franklin Senior Center in the upcoming year is to obtain a bus to provide equitable and accessible transportation to those in our community. The bus will supplement GATRA and provide transportation to medical appointments, group shopping/luncheon outings, and other various day trips for social programming opportunities. We will be adding a Bus Driver to our staff, likely around January 2024. In addition, the front office is seeing the need for an administrative assistant position, to assist the executive assistant and social services coordinator and help with scheduling bus rides. .

Our Supportive Day Program, in line with the Senior Center, is having continued success with a wait list for multiple days. We currently have a contract with Tri-Valley Elder Services and will also be contracting with HESSCO Elder Services, to help provide scholarships for residents to participate in this program. Tri-Valley Elder Services provides guidelines on how to operate the program and we successfully met these guidelines when we were audited in July 2022. We recently experienced some transition in staffing for the program. We traditionally ran the program with all part-time staff. Going forward, there will be two full-time staff, a coordinator and an assistant, running the program. This will ensure continued success with this program to match the needs of the members that participate

Throughout FY22 and FY23, the Director and Deputy Director worked closely with the COA advisory board, the Friends of Franklin Elders (FOFE), the FSC staff, and the Franklin community to develop a 7 year strategic plan which was presented to the Town Council in January 2023. Breaking down the Senior Center into 11 categories, a strategic goal was developed for each category as shown below:

- **Staffing/ Administration & Volunteers:** Ensure that all Senior Staff and Volunteers are adequately trained to carry out the mission of the Franklin Senior Center
- **Programming & Amenities:** Offer numerous opportunities, amenities, and programs for the aging population of Franklin that are diverse, inclusive, and meet the needs of the community
- **Social Services:** Serve as a resource to the community for social service needs, providing awareness and education of resources, advocacy, and continue to develop outreach and partnerships.
- **Common Grounds Cafe and Nutrition:** Cook subsidized meals and offer nutrition classes within a functional and sustainable cafe for the aging population at the Franklin Senior Center
- **Health and Wellness:** Improve and increase focus, funds, and programming for all health and wellness activities
- **Supportive Day Programming & Alzheimer's/Dementia:** Provide high quality, dementia informed, and engaging adult day services to members of the community to help them age in place.
- **Fiscal/ Budget:** Continuously evaluate and look for funding opportunities to provide subsidized services and programs to the community.
- **Facility & Space:** Define, evaluate, and organize the facility, in conjunction with the DPW and Facilities, to support all the programs and services provided at the Senior Center.
- **Transportation:** Provide reliable, consistent, and equitable opportunities for transportation for the seniors in the community.
- **Marketing:** Develop trending, informative, and eye catching marketing and outreach materials to advocate for all services and programs.
- **Outreach and Advocacy:** Serve as the resource and advocate for the aging population in Franklin

Accomplishments:

- Worked with AARP to provide Income Tax Preparation Assistance to senior residents.
- The Common Grounds Cafe continues to be an integral part of our senior center, providing affordable and nutritious meals to about 65 seniors daily for breakfast and lunch. A popular and successful program is "Eat Around the World", where members are offered a cultural experience learning about and trying various cuisines from different countries.
- Successfully completed a low vision assistive technology grant from CHNA-6, and are continuing to work with Mass Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (MABVI) to provide low vision assistance, technology assistance, and support for seniors in Franklin and the surrounding communities of: Blackstone, Bellingham, Douglas, Hopedale, Norfolk, Foxboro, Milford, Millis, Medway, Mendon, Millville, Northbridge, Upton, Uxbridge, and Wrentham.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- Provided successful themed monthly parties and events, most notably a Turkey Dinner with the Franklin Police Department, and a Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner with the Franklin Fire Department.
- New programs started: evening programs (Musical Acoustic Jam Session, Pool, Vinyasa Yoga, Dinner and Movie nights), Winter Wonderland, Monthly Technology Clinics, healthy weight loss programs, cribbage tournaments, hearing clinics, etc.
- Collaborated with the Franklin Food Pantry and the Hockomock YMCA to provide a monthly Mobile Food Pantry.
- Have successfully collaborated with Dean College to provide opportunities for Seniors to audit Dean College courses, a monthly Dean College lecture series at the Senior Center, and more.
- Worked with Dean College and Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School to provide internship opportunities at the Senior Center.
- Implemented a monthly bereavement support group: Pathways to Healing
- Implemented successful LGBTQ+ programming, seeing continued success with our monthly Rainbow Cafe, and in addition we've provided other programs such as Rainbow Jeopardy and a Kinky Boots showing.
- Completed a 7 year strategic plan and vision for the Franklin Senior Center.
- Built a strong online presence via social media, and continue to have successful marketing programs and services.
- Worked with both Allegra and Tri-County School Printing Services to provide a newsletter detailing programs and services at the Senior Center.
- Contracted, as of January 2023, with LPI to provide a 12 page newsletter in color
- Hosted the Veteran's successful "Tune It Out" Program on Tuesday nights, where veterans of any age are able to learn how to play guitar, hone in on their skills, and be provided support and socialization with other veterans.
- Provided a luncheon for the First Responders of the Town to thank them for all they do.
- The Public Health Nurse and Epidemiologist provided health and wellness classes including but not limited to hand only CPR, first aid classes, stop the bleed training, etc.
- Helped over 300 Franklin residents with human services related needs including housing, fuel assistance, MASS Health, Medicare, etc.
- Connected with At Home Hearing to provide bimonthly hearing clinics.
- Collaborated with Tri-County's Medical Assisting Class to offer real life experiences for their sophomore class

This past year, the Senior Center was aided with \$20,000 in ARPA funds to assist with GATRA ridership to and from the Senior Center. We found this to be extremely beneficial and encouraging for our seniors to come to the senior center without having to worry about the additional cost. This year, we have built this cost into our expense request. We are also requesting a slight increase to our dues and membership expenses and office supplies budget. Our staff will be taking advantage of professional development opportunities including but not limited to conferences, continuing education, and more. And with three different departments housed within the Senior Center, the office supplies budget will assist in covering costs of printing, paper, and other office supplies.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

DEPARTMENT: COUNCIL ON AGING		FUNCTION: HUMAN SERVICES			DEPT #: 541		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	260,022	317,234	486,896	607,649	607,649	-	
EXPENSES	1,599	5,740	6,700	33,100	33,100	-	
<b>TOTAL COUNCIL ON AGING :</b>	<b>\$261,621</b>	<b>\$322,974</b>	<b>\$493,596</b>	<b>\$640,749</b>	<b>\$640,749</b>	<b>-</b>	

### VETERANS SERVICES

#### General Purpose/Mission Statement:

The Veterans' Services Office's mission is to counsel, advise and assist Veterans and their dependents. The Veteran population in Franklin is over 1,120. Duties encompass, but are not limited to, dispensing state-sponsored Veterans' Benefits under MGL Chapter 115. Massachusetts Veterans' Benefits vary according to need and income. They are considered a "benefit of last resort" because income restrictions are very low. The town is reimbursed 75% by the Commonwealth in the next fiscal year.

Our office also helps Franklin Veterans and eligible dependents:

- File VA claims, including disability compensation, DIC, VA Pension/Aid and Attendance
- Apply for VA Health Care (Veterans only)
- Cover emergency costs for heat, transportation, and food via Veterans' Municipal Fund
- Apply for low-income or emergency housing
- Access health care services through referrals to Tri-Valley Services, Inc.
- Access mental health, substance abuse, and vocational rehabilitation services
- Apply for Veterans' Property Tax Work-Off Program
- Learn about disabled Veterans' property tax exemptions
- Apply for Veterans' ID cards, Welcome Home Bonus, and RSVP Rides for Vets
- Meet other Veterans and attend the social events organized by our department

#### Staffing:

- 1 full-time Veterans' Services Officer
- 1 part-time Veterans' Services Assistant

#### Strategic Initiatives to be continued in FY 24:

- Chapter 115. So far in FY 23, Veterans' Services has dispersed \$94,275 in Chapter 115 benefits to Franklin Veterans and eligible dependents. The Franklin VSO is a member of the MVSOA committee which sent recommended changes to DVS this spring for their review of 108 CMR, the guideline for Chapter 115 benefits. The goal of participating on this committee is to advocate for changes to the CMR which benefit Veterans and eligible dependents.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- VA Claims. Veterans' staff have assisted Franklin Veterans in bringing in more than \$5.8 million worth of VA tax-free benefits that have helped improve the lives of Veterans and their families in town with monies owed to them for their service.
- Veterans' Organizations. Franklin VSO actively participates in the Southeastern Massachusetts Veterans' Service Officers Association (SMVSOA) and the Massachusetts Veterans' Service Officers Association (MVSOA). Membership includes annual dues, and traveling to quarterly meetings and bi-annual training events.
- Franklin Municipal Veterans' Assistance Fund. This dedicated fund authorized by the Town Council allows residents to make a donation to the fund to assist Franklin Veterans and their families with the costs of food, transportation and home heating oil. Thanks to our generous donors, the fund has provided \$8,288 in aid to 32 Veterans and eligible dependents in the form of grocery store gift cards, heat bill assistance, car repairs, and Senior Center Cafe Ben's Buck during FY23. This fund's current balance is \$9,128.
  - Anyone can [make a donation here](#) and we appreciate your support for Franklin Veterans.
- Veterans' Gift/Assistance Fund. This fund provides additional support to assist our Franklin Veterans and Veterans' activities. Thanks to our generous supporters, we have used \$3,654 of this fund to assist Veterans and eligible dependents with housing, dental, and vision expenses, and \$1,238 for Veterans' events, during FY23. The fund's current balance is \$9,524. This fund is also supported by donations and anyone may make a donation.
- Memorial Walkway-Monument Restoration Fund. This fund is supported by donations from individuals and businesses, as well as the purchase of dedicated bricks for the Walkway. These funds support the construction and maintenance of the Walkway and town War Memorials. Excess funds can be used to support the Veterans' Assistance Fund. The fund's balance is currently \$73,030.
- Veterans' Memorial Walkway. The Veterans' Services Assistant manages the brick orders and installment for the Veterans Memorial Walkway. Forty-five (45) bricks were installed in Nov 2022 to coincide with Veterans' Day. There are currently forty-one (41) brick orders to be installed before Memorial Day 2023. Bricks may be purchased for any U.S Veteran, living or deceased.
- War Monument Restoration Project. Worked with contractors and procurement to start monument restoration for the Civil War Monument, World War I Monument, Persian Gulf Monument, and Spanish-American War Monument during FY 23. The work should be completed in the spring of 2023. For FY 24, we will plan cleaning and restoration of the remaining monuments.
- Veterans' Property Tax Work-Off. This program is available to all Veterans as defined by MA state law and their surviving spouses. Currently, there are 7 active participants. The Veterans' Services Assistant manages the program in coordination with the VSO and Senior Center Director.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- Education and Outreach.
  - The Franklin VSO attends annual DVS training, bi-annual MVSOA trainings, and quarterly SMVSOA meetings to stay informed about all Veteran-related topics.
  - In FY23, the VSO resumed the Franklin TV show Veterans' Call, airing 5 episodes in FY23, including interviews with State of MA Veterans' Bonus Manager Steve Croteau, DVS National Service Officers Tom Ryan and Matt Ching (PACT Act, Aid and Attendance), VFW Post 3402 Quartermaster Ernest Carruthers, and American Legion Post 75 Commander John Milot. These interviews were also posted on Franklin TV's YouTube channel, local town news outlets, social media, and the Franklin Veterans' Services website.
  - Veterans' Services coordinated a resume-building workshop led by staff from New England Center and Home for Veterans on Dec 9, 2022, and an online Franklin Career Fair with MA Hire on Feb 8, 2023.
  - Our website was also updated to include more information about employment resources and local property tax information for Veterans.
  - We continue to build a core group of female Veterans in Franklin and surrounding towns to increase engagement and social opportunities.
- Veterans' Council. Veterans' Services continues to Chair the Veterans' Council which meets monthly to discuss and plan Veterans events and activities. The Council is composed of Franklin Veterans organizations and other social and civic organizations in Franklin.
- Veteran mental health and suicide prevention.
  - Utilizing partnerships to expand community social networks
  - Attending training sessions on how to identify at-risk Veterans
  - Working with healthcare partners to ensure at-risk Veterans and family members are given access to mental health services in a timely manner
  - Conducting comprehensive case management for at-risk Veterans to assess what additional resources are available to them.
  - Working with Veterans' Liaison Officers from the Franklin Police Dept to achieve optimal outcomes for Veterans in active crisis.
- Veterans Events.
  - Veterans' Coffee Socials. Coordinated by the Veterans' Services Assistant and catered by Franklin Starbucks, these socials are increasing in popularity. Our office will continue to invite guest speakers regarding Veteran-specific programs. A Quilt of Valor Ceremony is being planned to honor Korean War Veterans in conjunction with Korean War Veterans Armistice Day (July 27) at the coffee social on July 5, 2023.
  - Tune It Out. This guitar-instruction program for Veterans hosted an Open House in Nov. 2022. There are currently 4 volunteer instructors and 15 active participants.
  - Purple Heart Community. On Aug 3, 2022 in conjunction with our monthly coffee social, we presented "Purple Heart" embossed caps to four of our Purple Heart Veterans in person, and

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

delivered four caps to those who could not attend. Pins were presented to family members in attendance.

- Veterans' Day Luncheon. Veterans' Services worked with partner organizations to hold the annual 2022 Veterans' Day Luncheon (Nov 11), which was hosted by the Franklin Elks Club and included guest speaker Robert Gardner, Franklin Purple Heart and Bronze Star recipient, US Army. Franklin Veterans' Services provided flowers, decorations, and the cake for the luncheon, as well as a Certificate of Appreciation for the Franklin Elks Club.
- Memorial Day Events. Plans for 2023 include a breakfast, parade, and ceremony. Breakfast speakers will include State Representative Jeff Roy and Rose Turco, a Franklin Educator and Veterans' Council member. The breakfast will be held at the Franklin Senior Center, catered by Tri-County Culinary students, and paid for by Friends of the Franklin Elders. The parade and ceremony are being coordinated in conjunction with American Legion Post 75, VFW Post 3402, the Veterans' Council, Franklin Police Department, Franklin Fire Department, Franklin DPW, Franklin Facilities, Franklin Public Schools Music Dept, and other partners. Franklin Elks Club Exalted Ruler and steadfast supporter of Veterans, Mark Ellis, will be the 2023 Memorial Day Parade Grand Marshal and Guest Speaker. The Memorial Day Fund will pay for the parade police detail, needed signage, and cemetery flags.
- Partnerships. Veterans' Services has established and/or reinforced partnerships with the following organizations: American Legion Post 75, VFW Post 3402, Franklin Senior Center, Franklin Police Department, Franklin Fire Department, Franklin Public Schools, Franklin Elks Club Lodge 2136, Franklin Elks Riders, Franklin Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Knights of Columbus Council 1847, Franklin Housing Authority, Tri-Valley Health Care Services, MA Dept. of Veterans' Services, MA Veterans' Service Officer Association, Southeastern MA Veterans' Services Officer Association, 22 Mohawks, VA SEEK program, Boston VA Health Care, Brockton Vet Center, Home Base, MA Hire, RSVP Rides for Vets, Franklin TV, Franklin Matters, Franklin Town News, Franklin Observer, Franklin Historical Society, Ginley and Oteri Funeral Homes, Franklin Starbucks, Franklin Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, and the Franklin Garden Club.

### Trends expected to continue into FY24:

- During FY 23, Veterans' Services has provided comprehensive claim assistance and case management for over 124 Franklin Veterans and their surviving spouses.
- Decrease in the number of Chapter 115 recipients from 19 to 14. This is due to recipient deaths, recipients receiving new sources of income, and outdated budget guidelines, which render many low-income Veterans and surviving spouses ineligible.
- High/Increased demand for grocery gift cards, fuel assistance, affordable housing, and dental assistance.
- High demand for assistance with VA disability compensation claims of all types.
- Frequent inquiries regarding VA Aid and Attendance and VA Health Care.
- Steady demand for eldercare services and caregiver support (referrals).
- Steady demand for mental health services for Veterans of all ages (referrals).
- High demand for social events and opportunities to connect with other Veterans.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- Our office will continue to provide excellent customer service and be a community leader for Veterans' related activities and services.

We appreciate the community's support of our Veterans. If you would like to make a donation to support Franklin Veterans, you may do so by making a donation online [here](#).

DEPARTMENT: VETERANS SERVICES		FUNCTION: HUMAN SERVICES			DEPT #: 543		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	-	73,755	97,714	106,393	106,393	-	
EXPENSES	68,023	15,428	11,115	11,115	11,115	-	
VETERANS SERVICES	126,514	116,984	165,000	165,000	165,000	-	
<b>TOTAL VETERANS SERVICES :</b>	<b>\$194,536</b>	<b>\$206,168</b>	<b>\$273,829</b>	<b>\$282,508</b>	<b>\$282,508</b>	-	

## CULTURE & RECREATION

### PUBLIC LIBRARY

#### General Purpose/Mission Statement

##### **Town of Franklin's Community Vision**

To be a vibrant community that supports the arts, non-profit organizations, higher education and businesses in an atmosphere that allows growth and prosperity while at the same time conserving our heritage, natural resources, and history. We will build on and celebrate our uniqueness as a community and maintain the quality of life that is a strength and competitive advantage.

##### **Franklin Public Library Vision**

Franklin Public Library strives to be the trusted source of information, inspiration, enrichment and opportunity.

##### **Mission**

The mission of the Franklin Public Library is to foster knowledge and engagement through education, enrichment, and technology.

In pursuing this mission, the Library values:

##### **Access**

The FPL is open and free to all. We are steadfastly committed to providing access to information, resources, and programming.

##### **Community and Diversity**

We value individual needs, experiences, and differences and strive to provide a welcoming and inclusive library community.

##### **Technology**

We support creative ideas, encourage experimentation, and embrace advancing technology. We continue to expand opportunities for virtual community engagement in addition to our traditional formats

.

##### **Knowledge**

We are inspired by the transformative power of information and facilitate the pursuit of education and discovery through diverse resources, programs, and assistance

.

##### **Service**

We are committed to providing professional and responsive services to a wide range of patrons.

##### **Stewardship**

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

We are committed to the prudent management of our resources and welcome the participation of our community in decision-making and service development.

### **Preservation**

We honor and preserve our unique history and traditions.

### **Staffing:**

- 11 full-time
- 1 part-time

### **Strategic Initiatives**

The Library continues to enjoy extraordinary community and fiscal support. For the sixth year in a row, the library budget has met the Municipal Appropriation Requirement. (MAR) This continued investment in a strong library ensures all residents uninterrupted access to free information, resources, education and enrichment.

The Library supplements municipal appropriations through grants and generous donations from the Franklin Library Association (FLA), the Friends of the Franklin Library and other charitable organizations who support the Library.

In December 2022, the FLA made a significant donation of \$70,000 for the restoration of the Murals in Memorial Hall. The FLA has been a cornerstone of the Library's inspirational history. This year, the FLA closed after a century of service. Originally formed to fund library operations, FLA turned its focus on restoration and preservation in 1982 when the town took over. To date, they have expended over \$525,000 for the preservation and restoration of a remarkable range of early written local materials with great significance to Franklin's history and the restoration of the beautiful paintings and murals.

A few examples of items that have been digitized and made available for the first time online include works that preceded the FLA to the present:

- Records of Justice Jabez Fisher
- Records of the FLA
- Notes on Franklin History, 1878
- Fire District records, 1868-1917
- School Committee record books, 1880-1919
- List of Residents directories for the Town of Franklin, 1884-2017
- 35 mm microfilm reel of the Franklin Town Records, 1736-1824

These resources are vital for genealogy and local history research.

### **Restoration of the Library Murals and Paintings**

Previous restoration efforts of the Gallison/Juglaris murals and painting in Memorial Hall, the Delivery Room, and the Reading Gallery were substandard and damaging. With funding from the FLA, the library has:

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- Completed a detailed study of the murals and paintings by art and architectural experts to determine the best way to restore them to their original motifs. This required cleaning each work, removing layers of paint from previous restorations, and reinstating the historic colors and designs on the decorative plaster.
- Restored all of the paintings, frames, and murals in Memorial Hall and the Delivery Room
- Invested in a beautiful, glass case to display the original Benjamin Franklin donation

The community owes an innumerable debt of gratitude to the FLA for safe-guarding and preserving the magnificent art and architecture, the original Benjamin Franklin collection and other local history collections as well as the irreplaceable historic manuscript collection. These efforts ensure that future generations will continue to benefit from our unique historical collections and enjoy the awe-inspiring splendor of the building.

To the Friends of the Franklin Library we offer our grateful thanks for funding programs, museum passes and patio furniture.

Throughout the year, our dedicated and talented staff has been working diligently to keep the doors of possibility open for thousands of individuals and families. They have provided responsive services, developed programs to reach new audiences and built robust collections.

The Head of Reference and Public Services produced a brilliant chronicle of the Town's historic districts. This information is available on the library website.

We implemented an English as a Second language (ESL) program to help non-native English speakers improve their reading, writing, listening and conversational skills. To date, 59 volunteer tutors have stepped up to the plate. The Assistant Director has applied for a \$15,000 grant to expand the ESL collection and program.

Based on the feedback received from a 2022 survey we have increased music, and art opportunities across the broad range of audiences.

**Library partnerships:** The Library draws upon local and national expertise, community resources, and partnerships with municipal departments, community agencies, educational and cultural institutions, and individuals to assist in program delivery. In October 2022, 480 people participated in the Health Fair planned and flawlessly executed by Cathleen Liberty, the Director of the Town of Franklin Health Department. Planning is underway for a second fair in May.

Camille Bernstein and Steve Sherlock have teamed up to bring the sophisticated art of creative writing through poetry to residents of all ages during National Poetry month in April.

Through collaboration with neighboring libraries for events, such as: Author Talks, History Presentations, and Cultural Seminars; we have expanded virtual program offerings to our patrons; providing a wide range of opportunities to engage with new and exciting material.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

Working with the IRS, we have established a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance site to serve low income patrons in our community. We look forward to expanding this program from two to three days a week in the coming year.

We began collaborations with local small businesses to bring hybrid attendance seminars on various topics of interest.

Keeping the youth engaged with enriching early literacy programs, exciting after school activities, homework help, outreach to the schools and summer learning activities remains a priority.

The Youth Services department has enjoyed a period of growth and community goodwill over this fiscal year, with successes in program attendance, school and community partnerships, and exciting plans for the future.

Our newest monthly program, Community Conversations is a collaboration with local poet/activist Jamele Adams, who alongside Caleigh Keating facilitates and engages in meaningful conversations with community members on a range of topics, including generational differences, housing, book banning, racism, food insecurity and more. These conversations are geared towards participants of all ages, and have seen meaningful engagement from local teens.

We have been working with local community groups to expand our cultural programming. Annual celebrations include: Diwali, Lunar New Year, and Eid.

We are currently working with Dean College on two poetry/writing events geared toward teens during the month of April, with additional writing and self-expression workshops in development for next year. This exciting partnership will hopefully grow to include open mic nights and more.

Following the past season's success, we are expanding our Farmer's Market visits to include adult offerings for the upcoming market season, and will be providing more comprehensive library services onsite, from Museum pass highlights to library app tutorials, in addition to kids crafts and interactive activities.

**School relationships:** In addition to our weekly BLAST program which reaches an average of 45-75 students per week at all 3 middle schools. We have expanded to the 5th grade at both Oak St and Keller Elementary. We plan to expand to other 5th grade classrooms in the future.

We are currently planning a graphic novelist panel in partnership with the middle schools scheduled for May, which will hopefully include not just author talks and signings, but also some creative expression and art department faculty and student involvement.

We also expanded upon weekly storytimes at the Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC) to ensure representation amongst the Monday, Wednesday, Friday classrooms. We have continued our quarterly visits to Dean College Children's Center and are also revitalizing our previous partnership with Bright Horizons that we enjoyed pre-covid. All of these collaborations serve to connect families to library services, familiarize children, teachers, and caregivers with the library's offerings and also boost circulation within the department.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

**Program Attendance:** We have seen a steady upward trend in attendance numbers for our weekly, weekend, and afternoon storytimes. We have expanded our afternoon programming for all ages, currently providing toddler programs 3 afternoons a week, school-age programs 4 afternoons a week, and a weekly art program for middle school children. Tween and teen attendance at weekly programs is thriving. We have also enjoyed record numbers at our most recent holiday programming, notably our Trunk or Treat event and our Noon Year's Eve Party.

**On the Horizon:** An internal reworking of our summer reading program that will engage and incentivize families and readers of all ages throughout the summer, alongside a dynamic lineup of summer programs and events. We will continue partnerships with Dean College on community events geared toward teens and students. Exciting changes are coming to the play space in the children's room to accommodate the growing numbers of patrons using the space.

**FY2023 in Figures**

<b>Library Collections Circulation</b>			
	<b>FY 2021</b>	<b>FY 2022</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>Collection Use</b>	297,826	397,120	33%
<b># of Children's Programs</b>	203	470	132%
<b>Children's Program Attendance</b>	5,455	12,216	124%
<b># of Adult Programs</b>	57	113	98%
<b>Adult Program Attendance</b>	966	1,626	68%
<b># of Teen Programs</b>	23	287	1148%
<b>Teen Program Attendance</b>	363	3,753	934%

<b>Library Facilities Usage</b>			
	<b>FY 2021</b>	<b>FY 2022</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>Meeting/Study Rooms</b>	NA	1,047	NA
<b>Library Visits</b>	26,636	109,420	311 %
<b>Computer Use</b>	903	9,464	948 %
<b>Website Use</b>	104,852	117,135	12%
<b>Wi-Fi Use</b>	7,057	0	%

**NOTE: Wi-Fi use statistics for FY 2022 not available per IT Department**

**FY 2024 Goals & Action Plan:**

**Goal 1:** Franklin Public Library serves as a vital community resource, a facilitator of public discourse and civic engagement, the place where ideas are created, discovered and shared.

**Objective**

Establish the library as a civic focal point, a cultural destination and community-gathering place.

Actions:

- Convene at least four civic conversations annually where neighbors can discuss town, community, and national issues.
  - Media literacy
  - Digital literacy
  - Civic health
  - Environment
  - Affordable housing
  
- Assess the merits of opening on Sundays during summer months.

**Goal 2:** The Library functions as a community advocate with engaging programs, collections and services that celebrate its unique history and heritage and promote an appreciation and understanding of the heritage of others.

**Objective**

Present events and exhibits focusing on Town of Franklin's culture and history.

Actions:

- Connect our community with our diverse local culture and history through monthly exhibits/displays and programs that promote cultural understanding.
  - Diwali
  - Lunar New Year
  - Eid
  
- Celebrate, uplift and elevate cultural traditions reflected in community demographics through compelling collections and expert assistance

**Objective**

Build a broader spectrum of collaborations and non-traditional partnerships that feature community voices and reflect community needs and interests.

Actions:

- Engage the creative community, colleges, the Franklin Cultural District and the Franklin Downtown Partnership, Municipal departments to initiate at least three community-wide projects annually.

- Develop target programming to reach new audiences.
  - Expand volunteer tax assistance VITA program.
  - Increase special needs programs
  - Expand English as a Second language ESL program to include citizenship and GED

**Goal 3:** The Library provides Franklin residents with state-of-the-art technology and high-speed access to the digital and online world and assistance navigating new technology, exploring new formats and experimenting with innovative devices.

**Objective**

Improve library productivity by incorporating new tools and technology strategies for the most efficient and cost-effective delivery of library services.

Actions:

- Identify options to improve the technologies and processes used to locate and circulate materials in ways that make services and collections more accessible and intuitive to the public.
- Evaluate and assess opportunities to include emerging technology into service delivery.

**Objective**

Evaluate, identify and provide training opportunities in alternate formats to staff.

Actions:

- Focus on development of computer competencies for library staff so that staff will be prepared to educate for digital literacy.
- Provide training options using different media to all staff. (i.e., workshops, staff meetings & cross-training, webinars, job-relevant training offered through the Minuteman Library Network, Massachusetts Library System, Town of Franklin, educational institutions and conferences).

**Goal 4:** Awaken and nurture the community's love of reading and passion for learning and personal growth.

**Objective**

Build community around books in all formats.

Actions:

- Employ a variety of initiatives to foster the love of reading and learning, connect readers to new books, and provide opportunities for people to connect and engage around a common love of books, literature, community and culture.
  - 1000 books before Kindergarten
  - Bookopoly
  - Book discussion groups
  - Community wide read (Franklin Reads)
  - Book displays
- Purchase multiple copies of new high-demand fiction and nonfiction in various formats.
- Expand community open houses with monthly book sales and a cultural component.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- Employ at least three different methods to highlight and promote library collections beyond basic book displays and social media.
  - Library monthly e-newsletter
  - Library website
  - Scavenger hunts
  - Multi-promoting

### **Objective**

Develop relevant and inspiring collections that reflect the evolving and varied needs and interests of patrons.

#### Actions:

- Continue to use effective collection development tools to analyze collection use and trends and tailor purchases accordingly.
- Respond to the changing ways in which the community experiences books, gathers information and creates content.

### **Objective**

Strengthen the Library's contribution to the education of Franklin's youth.

#### Actions:

- Develop resources that support school curriculum through collaborative relationships with educators.
- Continue bringing students and library together through weekly school visits across the district.
- Ensure every teacher and school administrator is aware of the Library's ability to provide students with homework assistance and resources, access to technology and diverse collections through school-wide library card drives, classroom card creation, and live tutorials.

### **Objective**

Develop a comprehensive approach to library programming for all ages.

#### Actions:

- Engage all ages and abilities with hands-on interactive activities and learning opportunities to include weekly Art workshops, music performances, dance lessons, STEAM, literacy, life skills, health and wellness, author talks, genealogy and much more.
- Maintain a successful series of weekly programs for children and continually evaluate these programs to ensure a commitment to an enriching, welcoming and friendly environment for all families.
- Maintain our robust program offerings for babies and toddlers, to facilitate new parent engagement with the library and foster lifelong library usership for families starting at birth.
- Expand school-age program offerings and monthly teen programming in conjunction with valuable input from the Teen Advisory Board.
- Continue to shape a flexible, successful model for our summer reading program that ensures an upward trajectory of both signups and program completions, factoring in ease of signups and reporting, and incentivizes active engagement and participation for all ages.
- Explore special programs for young adults such as mental wellness, stress reduction, financial literacy and other specific topics of interest.

**Goal 5:** Strengthen community awareness and engagement

**Objective**

The Library will find new ways to enhance its image and increase public familiarity with resources, services and programs.

Actions:

- Facilitate sign-ups for e-mail registration at all weekly programs & at community events to increase the reach of the monthly e-newsletter.
- Create a unique logo for the library.
- Use technology/social media weekly to disseminate information and promote access to information, library programs, materials and services.
- Train front line staff to promote library resources and programs.
- Promote the library's mobile applications to enable patrons to engage with the library in new and creative ways.
- Update the library's web presence weekly to guide users to library resources, services, partner websites and complementary community resources

**Goal 6:** Visitors to the Library will have meaningful experiences in a comfortable, functional, inviting and accessible facility.

**Objective**

Adapt and energize library spaces for new uses in keeping with changing services, programs, interests, needs and the changing ways that patrons use the library.

Actions:

- Create additional quiet study and seating options
- Update service desks and shelving areas
- Review furniture annually for wear and develop a timetable for repair/replacement.

**Goal 7:** Increase customer satisfaction, fiscal stability and sustainability

**Objective**

Use assessment and survey tools to learn more about the community.

Action:

- Conduct an annual community needs assessment & patron satisfaction survey.
- Include feedback from survey in annual review of goals.

**Objective**

Explore new revenue opportunities.

Actions:

- Strategize with the Friends of the Franklin Library and other fundraising organizations to create new additional fundraising opportunities.
- Review grant opportunities annually and assign them to specific staff.
- Adopt policies that foster efficiency, cost-effectiveness and sustainability.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

**Objective**

Strengthen the library’s capacity to deliver on its mission

Actions:

- Maintain a diverse and active volunteer base through collaboration with the schools, Council on Aging and community groups.
- Work with the Union and Human Resources Department to use staff openings to reconfigure jobs, update job descriptions, roles and responsibilities to reflect new areas where additional support is required.

DEPARTMENT: LIBRARY	FUNCTION: CULTURE & RECREATION			DEPT #: 610		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels		
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final
PERSONAL SERVICES	515,437	641,684	790,524	810,468	810,468	-
EXPENSES	251,488	288,363	277,000	282,000	282,000	-
<b>TOTAL LIBRARY :</b>	<b>\$766,925</b>	<b>\$930,046</b>	<b>\$1,067,524</b>	<b>\$1,092,468</b>	<b>\$1,092,468</b>	-

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

General purpose/Mission statement:

The Recreation Department is committed to providing quality recreational programs and facilities to the residents of Franklin. By providing consistency, dependability and an obligation to our residents and the programs they partake in, we strive to elevate the quality of life for our community.

The Recreation Department is a service-based department. We are a self-supporting department, relying on our program fees to cover our expenses. We work interactively with local sports organizations, the Franklin public school department, individual Town residents, private groups, as well as other Town departments. In the course of a given year, over 12,000 people are affected by Recreation programs, parks and playgrounds. Our clientele continues to increase each year, as we topped 7,100 registrations this year. Recreation is responsible for scheduling all fields, playgrounds, and courts. The Recreation Department continues to serve the residents in the area of recreation and leisure services.

Staffing:

- 3 full-time employees
- 1 part-time employee
- 100+ Seasonal staff

Strategic Initiatives:

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- The Recreation Department has seen tremendous growth over the past year. Starting in July-September 2022, we saw the largest seasonal revenue increase in the department's history, bringing in over \$215,000 in the fall. Our department continues to see huge registration numbers this spring as we brought in \$175,000 from January-March. We anticipate \$700,000 in revenue in FY23.
- The Beaver Pond Expansion project is nearly complete as we have added an ADA compliant turf surface around the teen obstacle course, lacrosse rebound wall and the Vendetti playground. There is also a new picnic area with handicapped accessible walkways and a newly irrigated grass playing field. We hope to complete the expansion project this fall by adding a new scoreboard and a fully accessible elevated press box.
- Nason Street Tot Lot construction has started and the playground will be furnished with a beautiful new tot structure serving 2-5 year olds, a "Franklin themed" quad spring see saw and little brick schoolhouse, along with a net structure and ADA compliant poured in place safety surface. This project was funded through the FY23 Community Preservation Funds.
- We will continue to improve upon Concerts on the Common, adding food trucks, movie nights and coordination with the Farmers Market.
- Coordinate recreational activities with the youth and adult sports organizations (baseball, soccer, boys and girls lacrosse, softball, football, adult cricket, pickleball, street hockey and more), school department, non-profit organizations and other citizens groups.
- Continue the better utilization of park lands and coordination of fields, and conservation land within the Town of Franklin.
- Coordinate trail maintenance with Eagle scouts, boys scouts and girls scouts.
- Improve the quality of life and involve residents in recreational programs.
- Establish new self-supporting programs and explore ways of generating additional revenue through grants, donations and fundraising.
- Recreation administration consists of one full-time director, a full-time deputy director and program coordinator and one part-time clerical staff person.
- The Recreation Department has added additional programs (pickleball, red ball tennis, chess, ceramics, and strength and conditioning at the new obstacle course).

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

DEPARTMENT: RECREATION		FUNCTION: CULTURE & RECREATION			DEPT #: 630		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	291,168	336,281	382,218	463,765	463,765	-	
EXPENSES	162,065	230,550	273,400	277,000	277,000	-	
<b>TOTAL RECREATION :</b>	<b>\$453,233</b>	<b>\$566,830</b>	<b>\$655,618</b>	<b>\$740,765</b>	<b>\$740,765</b>	-	

**HISTORICAL MUSEUM**

**General Purpose/Mission Statement:**

The Franklin Historical Museum collects, preserves, and provides access to materials connected to the vibrant history of the Town of Franklin. Through its archives and various collection materials, the FHM seeks to create a greater appreciation for the people and events that came before it and cultivate an understanding that knowledge of the past brings about a better tomorrow.

**Vision Statement:**

The Franklin Historical Museum will be a thriving center for research and learning, complete with scholarly research projects, educational public programming, and access permitted to everyone from the advanced researcher to the novice elementary school student.

The collections housed at the FHM will be arranged and described completely and digital initiatives will be derived which will make it possible to view collections materials and catalog information online. Both goals will lay a smooth path to exploring the past with ease.

The programs and exhibitions of the FHM will continue to tell the stories of the Town, bolstering a great understanding and endearing respect for its history. It will expand public relations and marketing through social media efforts and by providing public programming in the classroom setting. As a result, the FHM will attract increased financial support and donations which will, in turn, allow the Museum to grow and provide better services to its constituency.

**Staffing:**

- 1 part-time Archivist - The FY24 budget proposes to make the Archivist full-time.

**Strategic Initiatives:**

The Franklin Historical Museum has been hard at work organizing collections, creating finding aids, and ensuring that researchers can find what they are looking for. Thus far, the Museum houses 70 collections spanning approximately 200 linear feet. These collections include postcards, sheet music, photographs, scrapbooks, letters, pamphlets, and books and will continue to grow as the backlog diminishes.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

The FHM COVID-19 Archive Project has collected a plethora of stories from the people of the Town and will be used by future historians to learn about the unprecedented times we have been experiencing over the past two years. An exhibit was curated for the Museum illustrating some of the quotes which have been collected.

Looking ahead, the Franklin Historical Museum will continue to catalog collections in order to diminish backlog, rework some of the exhibits as well as add new ones to keep patrons interested in the history of the Town, apply for grants to aid in restoration, renovation and preservation initiatives, and work alongside the Historical Commission and Friends of the Franklin Historical Museum in order to keep history alive in the Town of Franklin.

The Museum also has potential to be a greater asset for the community. We hope to expand to facility rentals for a variety of events, a periodical newsletter, membership potential and redesigning the kitchen and basement spaces to be increasingly more productive. If the Town wants the Museum to take the next big step, a full-time curator is needed.

Please visit the Historical Museum’s website here: <https://www.franklinmuseum1778.com/>

DEPARTMENT: HISTORICAL MUSEUM		FUNCTION: CULTURE & RECREATION			DEPT #: 690		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	28,230	9,235	31,931	73,928	73,928	-	
EXPENSES	-	-	1,000	3,000	3,000	-	
<b>TOTAL HISTORICAL MUSEUM :</b>	<b>\$28,230</b>	<b>\$9,235</b>	<b>\$32,931</b>	<b>\$76,928</b>	<b>\$76,928</b>	-	

### HISTORICAL COMMISSION

#### General Purpose/Mission Statement

The Historical Commission is composed of seven (7) appointed voting members and several associate members. The mission of the Historical Commission is to preserve, protect, and develop the historic and archaeological assets of Franklin.

#### Strategic Initiatives:

The Historical Commission works to preserve the history of the Town of Franklin by identifying, describing, and locating buildings, structures, objects, areas, burial grounds, landscape features, and other sites that are of historical, architectural, or archaeological importance to the community. Many of the Town's historical assets are housed at the Franklin Historical Museum on West Central Street. The Commission works alongside the Archivist to make sure that these items are cared for properly.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

The Historical Commission partners with the Building Commissioner to manage the Demolition Delay Bylaw in Town as well as with the Director of Planning and Community Development to monitor the Town’s entries on the National Registers of Historic Districts and Buildings.

The Historical Commission hosts a Second Sunday Speaker Series at the Franklin Historical Museum every year. The Series engages the public in interesting and informative lectures on a monthly basis.

Please visit the Historical Museum’s website here: <https://www.franklinmuseum1778.com/>

DEPARTMENT: HISTORICAL COMMISSION		FUNCTION: CULTURE & RECREATION			DEPT #: 691		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
EXPENSES	922	3,807	4,000	4,000	4,000	-	
<b>TOTAL HISTORICAL COMMISSION :</b>	<b>\$922</b>	<b>\$3,807</b>	<b>\$4,000</b>	<b>\$4,000</b>	<b>\$4,000</b>	-	

**CULTURAL COUNCIL**

General purpose/Mission statement:

The Cultural Council is charged with promoting the arts, humanities and interpretive sciences in the community. The Council shall promote excellence, access, education, and diversity in the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences in order to improve the quality of life in Franklin. The Massachusetts Cultural Council encourages the arts, humanities and interpretive sciences within cities and towns by administering the distribution of the Arts Lottery Fund established under the provisions of MGL Chapter 10, Section 57. Each year, the Council receives funding from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, as well as a local appropriation in the town’s budget.

The Cultural Council decides on the distribution of State funds as well as the Town’s appropriation to the Council to promote the arts in Franklin. The Cultural Council is an appointed committee of volunteers who coordinate grant applications and awards for the Town.

Strategic Initiatives:

- \$10,000 was included in the FY24 budget for the annual Cultural Festival OR additional funds for community grants. With the proposed Director position, additional funds will be needed and are in great demand. With the festival in flux, at least the budget can increase a little to give the FCC and new Director some additional resources to meet the public demand for these issues.
- Continued expansion of cultural opportunities in Franklin through small grants to organizations to conduct arts and culture programming for the community.
- Continue to provide cultural rich programs and events for the public to enjoy.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

DEPARTMENT: CULTURAL COUNCIL	FUNCTION: CULTURE & RECREATION			DEPT #: 695		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels		
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final
EXPENSES	15,000	15,000	15,000	25,000	25,000	-
<b>TOTAL CULTURAL COUNCIL :</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>-</b>

**CULTURAL DISTRICT COMMITTEE**

General purpose/Mission statement:

The Cultural District Committee is an appointed seven (7) member volunteer board formed to provide oversight and management of the Franklin Cultural District. The Committee’s mission is to enrich and inspire our residents and visitors by fostering local cultural, artistic, culinary and historical development aligned with local partners in a defined walkable area that is easily accessible and serves as the center of economic activity.

In January 2019, the Massachusetts Cultural Council awarded the Franklin Cultural District formal status as a Massachusetts Cultural District. It is the Cultural District Committee's responsibility to implement the Cultural District’s goals, which are a blend of the Massachusetts Cultural District Initiative’s goals and Franklin's previous planning initiatives. Franklin Cultural District goals are as follows:

- Foster Partnerships. Continue to build and strengthen Franklin's Cultural District Partnership based on our common vision, goals and collaboration.
- Attract to and Promote Franklin. Attract artists and cultural enterprises to the Franklin Cultural District and promote their activity to both within Franklin and regionally.
- Encourage Business Development and Stimulate Economic Activity. Encourage and collaborate in culturally-related locally-minded and locally-based business and job creation by advocating for creation and support of small business incubators, makerspaces, and other cultural economic development resources.
- Become a Cultural Destination. Establish the district as a cultural tourist destination in the region.
- Historic Preservation. Preserve and reuse historic buildings and other sites.
- Arts and Culture Education. Foster local cultural appreciation and development via active community and school/education engagement.

Accomplishments:

The Franklin Cultural District is becoming the focal point for arts and culture in the south MetroWest region. During the Franklin Cultural District’s first year, the Cultural District Committee worked to implement a short term action plan for the first six months following Franklin Cultural District’s designation, including the following related accomplishments:

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

- Launching of Franklin Cultural District. The Committee assured the Cultural District was launched successfully, and worked towards meeting the Goals of the Cultural District.
- Cultural District Marketing. The Committee worked to implement the Cultural District’s short-term marketing plan. Work included development of a wide range of marketing materials, attending public events in order to publicize the new Cultural District, and completion of the new Franklin Cultural District Website ([www.franklinculture.org](http://www.franklinculture.org)).
- Worked to Strengthen the Cultural District Partnership. The Committee has actively worked toward strengthening the Cultural District Partnership, and has substantially increased the number of "partnering" organizations, and others interested in participating in Cultural District events and activities.

Strategic Initiatives:

The Committee’s current short term goals and initiatives include the following:

- Continue to strengthen FCD's Partnership, and increase the number of collaborative projects.
- Survey FCD Partners regarding the impact from collaborative marketing activities, as well as lessons learned and suggestions for the future.
- Develop FCD's long-term Marketing Plan, including further refinement of the cultural district brand and creation of a vibrant social media presence.
- Advocate for redevelopment of industrial properties within the Town's new Mixed Business Innovation District, which is the southwest corner of the Cultural District.
- Develop a Foundational Market Analysis and Market Position Summary for Franklin Center and Surrounding Neighborhoods. The Committee is collaborating with Franklin’s Planning Department and Franklin Downtown Partnership on a substantial economic development research, analysis and planning project.
- The Committee and its partners will continue to improve the Cultural District area, build upon our current strengths of performing arts and arts education, strive to create opportunities for all arts and culture related organizations and individuals, and continue to support and promote the arts throughout the Franklin Community.

DEPARTMENT: CULTURAL DISTRICT COMMITTEE		FUNCTION: CULTURE & RECREATION			DEPT #: 696		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
EXPENSES	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	-	
<b>TOTAL CULTURAL DISTRICT COMMITTEE :</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	-	

## DEBT & INTEREST

### RETIREMENT OF DEBT – GENERAL FUND

#### Type and Purpose of Debt

The Town of Franklin sells General Obligation Bonds to finance capital improvements and other projects that require large amounts of cash such as schools, public works, recreation, public safety, and public buildings. General Obligation Bonds are supported by the full faith and credit of the Town and are repaid from property taxes from both current and future property owners or, in the case of water or sewer projects, out of their respective enterprise funds. Over the last few years, typical rates for 20 year municipal bonds have been in the 3% to 4% range. With the current situation, rates may be more variable and possibly higher as less bidders compete in the marketplace.

The Town's last bond sale was for the purchase of open space land in December 2022.

#### Franklin's Current Debt Position

As of June 30, 2022, the Town of Franklin had approximately \$81.5 million of outstanding debt. Approximately \$41.2 million of outstanding debt is exempt under Prop 2 ½, \$24.5 million is water related; \$2.6 million is sewer related and \$17.3 million is non-exempt General Fund debt.

After a ratings review by Standard & Poor's in May 2022, the Town's bond rating was affirmed at AAA with a stable outlook.

Presently, there is a bond authorization for the ongoing water line and Beaver Street interceptor project.

FY23 Debt Service by Category:

1. School Buildings – Franklin High School, Keller-Sullivan, and Horace Mann-Oak St.
2. Public Buildings – Municipal Building, Library,
3. Technology - improvements to school and town systems
4. Public Safety – Fire Truck, Aerial Ladder Truck
5. Recreation – Beaver Street, High School football field, etc.
6. Public Works Buildings – DPW Garage addition/remodeling
7. Water Debt – Water mains, repairs, storage, lines and the water treatment plant through MWPAT.
8. Sewer Debt – MWPAT Beaver Street Interceptor and the MWPAT Title V loan and general sewer improvements throughout town.
9. Open Space - Purchased over 200 acres of open space, CPA funds

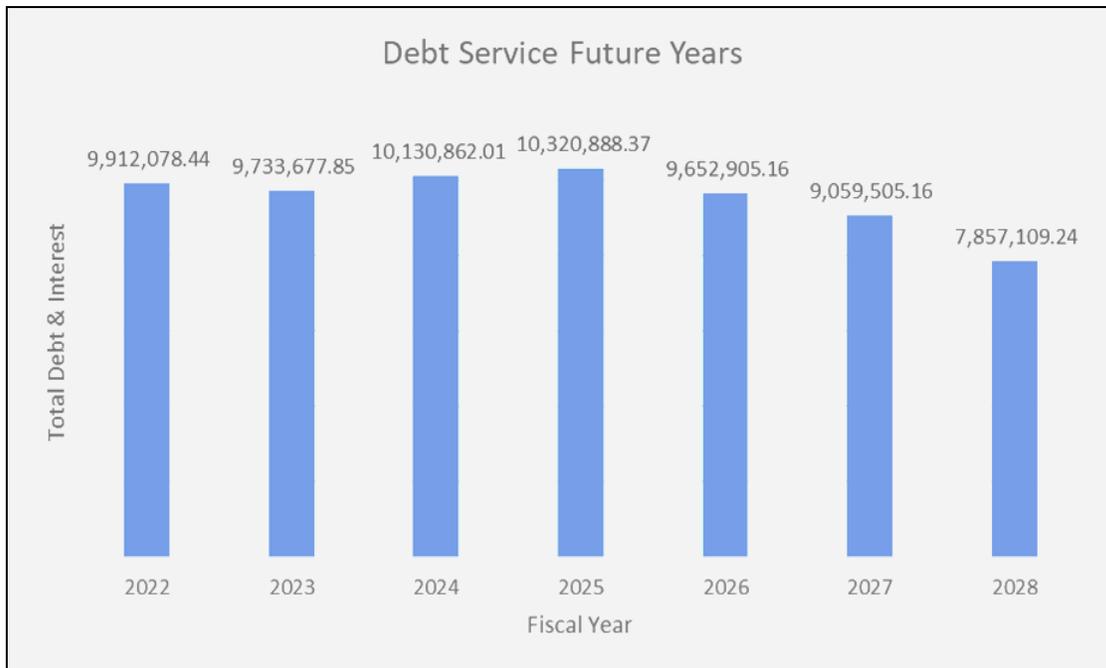
#### Debt Service Trend Chart

The chart below depicts a declining debt schedule over the next five fiscal years. As described in the Executive Summary, this is a major concern for the Town Administrator. [Town policy](#) aims at 3.5% of operating money for debt service. In FY24, only 1.77% of our operating money will be spent on debt service.

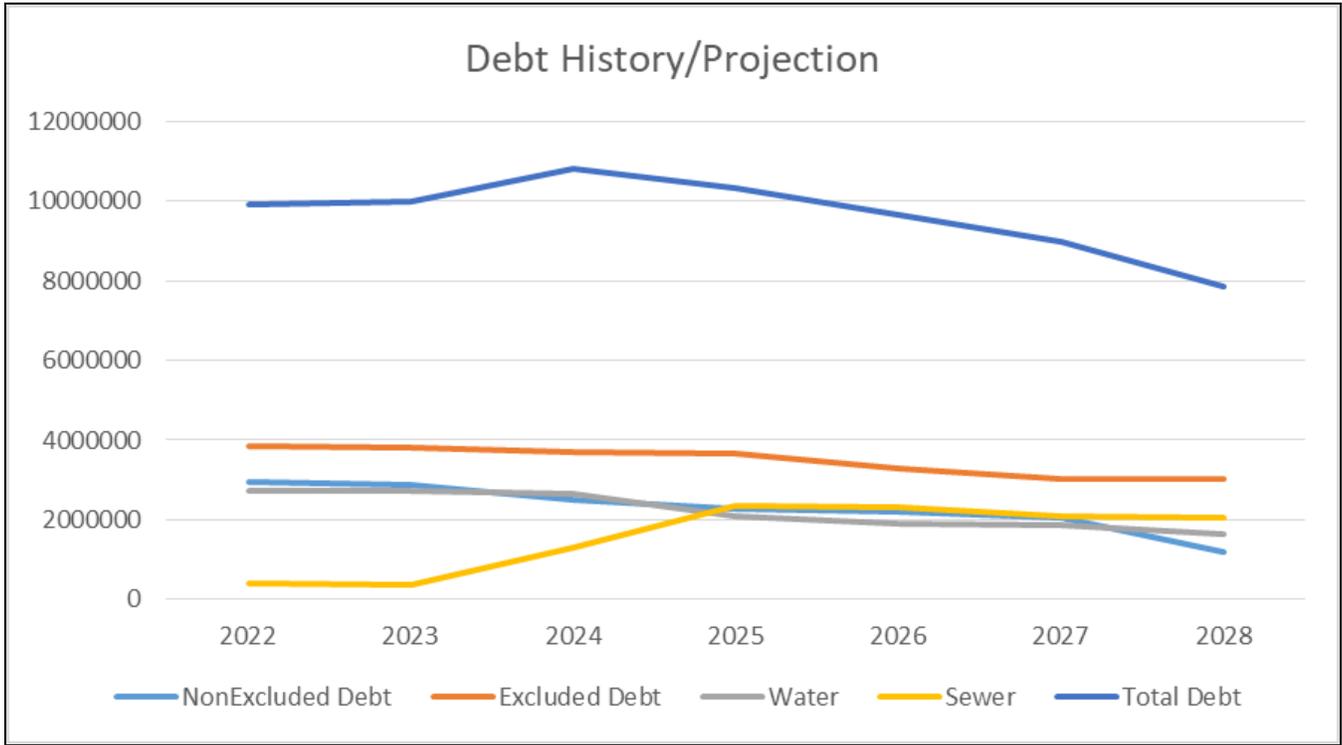
**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

Town of Franklin  
Future Year's Debt for Planning Purposes  
FY22-FY28 Budget

Fiscal Year	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Non-Excluded Debt	2,249,400.00	2,180,000.00	1,897,000.00	1,745,000.00	1,750,000.00	1,680,000.00	890,000.00
Non-Excluded Interest	690,438.49	678,679.17	587,477.50	506,772.50	428,872.50	350,722.50	275,322.50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,939,838.49</b>	<b>2,858,679.17</b>	<b>2,484,477.50</b>	<b>2,251,772.50</b>	<b>2,178,872.50</b>	<b>2,030,722.50</b>	<b>1,165,322.50</b>
Excluded Debt	2,138,500.00	2,194,000.00	2,175,000.00	2,245,000.00	1,955,000.00	1,775,000.00	1,850,000.00
Excluded Interest	1,709,430.00	1,611,485.00	1,510,775.00	1,417,875.00	1,334,900.00	1,254,650.00	1,181,450.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,847,930.00</b>	<b>3,805,485.00</b>	<b>3,685,775.00</b>	<b>3,662,875.00</b>	<b>3,289,900.00</b>	<b>3,029,650.00</b>	<b>3,031,450.00</b>
<b>TOTAL Non-Excluded &amp; Excluded Debt &amp; Interest</b>	<b>6,787,768.49</b>	<b>6,664,164.17</b>	<b>6,170,252.50</b>	<b>5,914,647.50</b>	<b>5,468,772.50</b>	<b>5,060,372.50</b>	<b>4,196,772.50</b>
Water/Sewer Enterprise Fund	2,467,754.30	2,383,623.09	2,875,906.81	3,306,084.00	3,166,084.00	2,981,084.00	2,806,084.00
Water/Sewer Enterprise Interest	656,555.65	685,890.59	1,084,702.70	1,100,156.87	1,018,048.66	1,018,048.66	854,252.74
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,124,309.95</b>	<b>3,069,513.68</b>	<b>3,960,609.51</b>	<b>4,406,240.87</b>	<b>4,184,132.66</b>	<b>3,999,132.66</b>	<b>3,660,336.74</b>
<b>YEAR</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>
<b>TOTAL DEBT AND INTEREST</b>	<b>9,912,078.44</b>	<b>9,733,677.85</b>	<b>10,130,862.01</b>	<b>10,320,888.37</b>	<b>9,652,905.16</b>	<b>9,059,505.16</b>	<b>7,857,109.24</b>



TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET



DEPARTMENT: DEBT SERVICE - PRINCIPAL		FUNCTION: DEBT & INTEREST			DEPT #: 710		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
EXPENSES	4,164,000	4,387,900	4,374,000	4,072,000	4,072,000	-	
<b>TOTAL DEBT SERVICE - PRINCIPAL :</b>	<b>\$4,164,000</b>	<b>\$4,387,900</b>	<b>\$4,374,000</b>	<b>\$4,072,000</b>	<b>\$4,072,000</b>	<b>-</b>	

DEPARTMENT: DEBT SERVICE - INTEREST		FUNCTION: DEBT & INTEREST			DEPT #: 750		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
EXPENSES	2,497,740	2,399,869	2,300,164	2,108,253	2,108,253	-	
<b>TOTAL DEBT SERVICE - INTEREST :</b>	<b>\$2,497,740</b>	<b>\$2,399,869</b>	<b>\$2,300,164</b>	<b>\$2,108,253</b>	<b>\$2,108,253</b>	<b>-</b>	

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

### RETIREMENT

General Purpose/Mission Statement:

This line item funds pensions for the Contributory (MGL Chapter 32) retirees. The Town of Franklin is a member of the Norfolk County Retirement System. The Norfolk County Retirement System was established in 1911 for the purpose of providing retirement benefits for County employees. At present, the system includes not only County employees and retirees, but also nineteen Norfolk County towns and twenty-one authorities and special districts. The system is governed by a five-member board chaired by the County Treasurer, and the Treasurer is responsible for the management of the System's funds. PERAC (Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission) exercises general supervision of the System.

The Town of Franklin receives an annual assessment from Norfolk County which covers all Municipal employees and non-teaching School Department employees working a minimum of 20 hours per week. The appropriation funds both the normal cost (the cost of current employees' future pensions) as well as the unfunded pension liability.

There are 104 contributory retirement systems for public employees in Massachusetts. A retirement board governs each system and all boards, although operating independently, are bound together under one retirement law—Chapter 32 of the Massachusetts General Laws—that establishes benefits, contribution requirements, and an accounting and funds structure for all systems. All 104 retirement systems are overseen by the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission (PERAC), which was created by Chapter 306 of the Acts of 1996.

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Norfolk County Retirement Assessment</b>	<b>Increase % over prior FY</b>
<b>2024</b>	\$7,501,821.00	4.44%
<b>2023</b>	\$7,183,210.00	7.31%
<b>2022</b>	\$6,693,600.00	8.41%
<b>2021</b>	\$6,174,365.00	7.09%
<b>2020</b>	\$5,765,354.00	10.37%
<b>2019</b>	\$5,223,882.00	9.48%
<b>2018</b>	\$4,771,398.00	9.65%
<b>2017</b>	\$4,351,658.00	10.24%
<b>2016</b>	\$3,947,535.00	7.81%
<b>2015</b>	\$3,661,687.00	-0.02%
<b>2014</b>	\$3,662,597.00	4.44%
<b>2013</b>	\$3,506,741.00	4.95%

EMPLOYEE HEALTH/LIFE INSURANCE

In FY23, the Town switched from standard health insurance with Harvard Pilgrim Health Care (HPHC) to a self-funded trust with the Massachusetts Strategic Health Group (MSHG). Franklin is one of 8 communities in the MSHG. Other communities include: Abington, Douglas, Dudley-Charlton Regional School District, Medway, Northbridge, Oxford and Webster. The MSHG also administers Medicare Advantage plans for retirees in Stoughton and Fall River.

In FY23, our rates increased by 2% for our High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) and 6.5% for our EPO and PPO plans. In FY24, increases are trending 6-8% across the Commonwealth. We were that our rates came in below trend and we will see a 4.25% increase on our HDHP and 6% increase on the EPO and PPO plans.

We will not have any disruption to our plans in fiscal year 2024. We are staying with the same carrier and our plan design will stay the exact same. This is very important since transitioning plans is always very disruptive to our employees and taxing for our human resources and finance staff. In addition, we were able to finalize rates about a month earlier than usual, since we have direct access to our claims data in live time and not have to wait for the insurance companies to catch up like we used to.

We continue to encourage employees to elect the high deductible health plan since they can save on premiums and also participate in a Health Savings Account to save money for healthcare expenses now and in the future. The Town will, for the sixth year in a row, contribute to the Health Savings Accounts for employees enrolled in the high deductible plan. The individual plan has a deductible of \$2,000 and the Town will contribute \$750. The family plan has a deductible of \$4,000 and the Town will contribute \$1,500. The Health Savings Account offers a rare triple tax advantage: An employee can contribute pre-tax dollars through payroll deductions; any interest or earnings grow tax-free; and an employee can withdraw money on a tax-free basis if it is used on qualified health care expenses.

We are just entering the Open Enrollment period in May 2023, so we are not sure how FY24 will turn out yet. However, the charts below show that each year, more and more employees are choosing to join the high deductible plan rather than the standard EPO and PPO.

**Number of employees (both Town and Schools) on the high deductible plan each fiscal year:**

	<b>FY19</b>	<b>FY20</b>	<b>FY21</b>	<b>FY22</b>	<b>FY23</b>
<b>Individual Plans</b>	24	49	48	74	111
<b>Family Plans</b>	40	131	131	155	222
<b>Total</b>	64	180	170	229	333

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

Even though we have experienced high rate increases over the last several years, we have been able to keep our overall health insurance budget under control, partially because of the migration to the high deductible plan. The charts below show the savings for both the Town and the employee.

**ANNUAL PREMIUM COSTS FOR THE TOWN (EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTION)**

	<b>Individual Plan</b>	<b>Family Plan</b>
<b>EPO</b>	\$8,713	\$22,267
<b>HDHP</b>	\$7,012 \$750 HSA contribution \$7,762 total	\$17,920 \$1,500 HSA contribution \$19,420 total
<b>Annual Savings for the Town when an employee chooses the HDHP instead of EPO</b>	\$951	\$2,847

**COST FOR EMPLOYEES ON AN INDIVIDUAL PLAN**

	<b>Annual Premium</b>	<b>Maximum Deductible that can be reached</b>	<b>Contribution from the Town</b>	<b>Total Potential Cost</b>
<b>EPO</b>	\$4,100	\$1,000	\$0	\$5,100*
<b>HDHP</b>	\$3,300	\$2,000	-\$750	\$4,550

An employee can save \$800 in annual premiums and potentially \$550 overall on the HDHP plan compared to the EPO.

**COST FOR EMPLOYEES ON A FAMILY PLAN**

	<b>Annual Premium</b>	<b>Maximum Deductible that can be reached</b>	<b>Contribution from the Town</b>	<b>Total Potential Cost</b>
<b>EPO</b>	\$10,478	\$2,000	\$0	\$12,478*
<b>HDHP</b>	\$8,433	\$4,000	-\$1,500	\$10,933
<b>Difference</b>	\$2,045			\$1,545

An employee can save \$2,045 in annual premiums and potentially \$1,545 overall on the HDHP plan compared to the EPO.

Note:

\* The cost of the EPO plan does NOT include additional co-pays, including \$30 for a primary care physician, \$45 for a specialist, \$45 for physical/occupational therapy, and \$150 for an ER visit (if not admitted). These costs can add up very quickly!

- In FY23, we also made some major changes to benefits for our retirees who are over 65 and on Medicare. We switched from a Medicare Supplement plan with Harvard Pilgrim to a Medicare Advantage plan with Aetna. This change resulted in significant savings for both our retirees and the Town, with annual savings of approximately \$140 for the retiree and \$297 for the Town for each subscriber.

The Massachusetts Strategic Health Group hired a wonderful vendor, Retirees First, to help all of our retirees who are on Medicare. Retirees First has a team of experienced retiree healthcare advocates who are available to answer any questions our retirees have and help them get the medical services they need. Retirees First has been instrumental in helping with this transition.

MSHG and Retirees First also assisted us in migrating about a dozen retirees from their current HMO and PPO plans to Medicare. Since these retirees started with the Franklin Public Schools before 1986 and were public employees for most of their careers, they never contributed to Medicare and therefore were not eligible for Medicare health insurance. The MSHG trust paid the Medicare late enrollment fee and helped these retirees transfer to Medicare. This results in a huge savings for both the Town and the retirees and they are now eligible for more comprehensive insurance for less!

#### NON-GIC SCHOOL RETIREES HEALTH/LIFE INSURANCE

In FY15, School retirees were transferred out of the School Department budget into the Town's Employee Benefits budget.

This line item continues to increase as more employees retire and the costs of the plans for those under 65 continue to increase. We did save some money this year with the switch in Medicare plans, so it did not go up as much as it would have otherwise.

#### RETIRED TEACHER HEALTH/LIFE INSURANCE

Effective July 1, 2007, the Town Council voted to end its participation in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Group Insurance Commission's (GIC) health benefit program for retired teachers. All retired teachers are now covered under the Town's Employee Benefits budget. The reason for this change was due to the dramatically increasing cost to supply health insurance benefits to its retired teacher population through the GIC. The costs in this line item continue to go down each year as retired teachers pass away and new retirees are budgeted under the "non-GIC" line item. The costs also decreased due to the switch to our new Medicare plan.

#### WORKER'S COMPENSATION

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

The Town purchases its Worker's Compensation insurance through MIIA. This policy covers all active town and school employees, excluding police and fire, which are covered through a different policy. MIIA offers programs for training and education that will help to offset increases in this area.

Payroll and job classification rates, which are part of the drivers that contribute to cost increases, are set by the State.

Our Police and Fire employees are covered under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 41, Section 100 and 111F, often referred to as "Injured on Duty", which is slightly different from standard Worker's Compensation. Our Injured on Duty insurance carrier is Gowrie Group.

### UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

The Town of Franklin, like most Massachusetts communities, is self-insured. This means that we pay the full cost of benefits awarded to former employees. The Unemployment budget covers all employees including School Department personnel. We increased this line item in FY21 and FY22 due to increased unemployment as a result of the COVID pandemic. We will reduce it again by about \$10,000 since we have now returned to pre-pandemic levels.

### MEDICARE

Medicare is a federally administered health insurance trust fund that pays for health services for individuals 65 years or older and the disabled receiving social security cash benefits. The Medicare Hospital Insurance (HI) Trust Fund is financed primarily through a tax on current earnings from employment covered by the Social Security Act. The Medicare Supplementary Medical Insurance (SMI) Trust Fund is financed through premiums paid by persons enrolled in the program and from general fund revenues of the federal government. Pursuant to Federal law, all employees hired after April 1, 1986 are subject to a 1.45% Medicare payroll tax. The Town of Franklin is obligated to match this payment.

### OTHER POST EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS (OPEB)

The Town provides post-employment healthcare and life insurance benefits for retired employees. The Town provides medical, prescription drug, and life insurance to retirees and their covered dependents. All active employees who retire from the town and meet eligibility criteria will receive these benefits. Retirees contribute between 32% and 50% of the cost of the health plan, as determined by the town. The Town contributes the remainder of the costs on a pay-as-you-go basis.

The Town has financial policies which prioritize investing into OPEB each year. Current policies require increasing our contribution by \$50,00 each fiscal year. In FY24, we are contributing \$800,000. The Town also dedicates 10% of free cash to OPEB each year.

The Town implemented GASB Statement 45, Accounting and Financial Reporting by Employers for Post-Employment Benefits other than Pensions. Statement 45 requires governments to account for other post-employment benefits (OPEB), primarily healthcare, on an accrual basis rather than on a pay-as-you-go basis. The effect is the recognition of an actuarially required contribution as an expense on the financial statements when a retiree earns their post-employment benefits, rather than when they use their

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

post-employment benefits. To the extent that an entity does not fund their actuarially required contribution, a post-employment benefit liability is recognized on the Towns Statement of Net Assets.

The most recent Actuary study was completed with data as of June 30, 2022. The Town’s accrued liability as of this date was approximately \$85,452,216.

The Town created an OPEB Trust and all funds were moved from the OPEB Stabilization account by a vote of Town Council. The OPEB Trust Committee voted to invest these funds with the State Pension Reserves Investment Trust (“PRIT”). These funds are overseen by the State’s Pension Reserves Investment Management Board (“PRIM”). The Trust currently has \$11,885,541 in net value.

### COMPENSATION RESERVE

These funds are for any wage adjustments during the fiscal year, to cover absences in individual departments where additional coverage is necessary, unexpected retirement costs, to settle collective bargaining agreements and implement the nonunion compensation and classification plan. Collective Bargaining will commence again in late 2024 and early 2025 for a new contract cycle beginning July 1, 2025.

DEPARTMENT: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS		FUNCTION: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS			DEPT #: 910		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
EXPENSES	12,605,572	13,481,052	14,352,700	15,101,071	15,101,071	-	
<b>TOTAL EMPLOYEE BENEFITS :</b>	<b>\$12,605,572</b>	<b>\$13,481,052</b>	<b>\$14,352,700</b>	<b>\$15,101,071</b>	<b>\$15,101,071</b>	-	

### LIABILITY INSURANCE

#### GENERAL PURPOSE/MISSION STATEMENT:

The Town purchases premium based liability, property, casualty, and automobile insurance. In addition the Town also insures for Public Officials Liability and School Board Legal Liability.

#### Strategic Initiatives:

- The Town has an active Safety Committee, which Operations Assistant to the Town Administrator Julie McCann and HR Director Karen Bratt co-chair. Representatives from each town department, both management and union, serve on the committee. The Safety Committee came up with best practices and policies to avoid workplace injuries and be safer on the job.
- Our insurance company, MIIA, provides a great incentive to stay safe through the “MIIA Rewards Program.” MIIA provides a list of different practices and policies which will increase safety. For each task we complete, we work towards a percentage discount off our Liability Insurance at the end of the year. For the past several years, we have maxed out our rewards and saved between \$35,000 to

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET**

\$75,000 per year in insurance premium. We expect to max out our savings again this year and receive a refund of approximately \$35,000.

DEPARTMENT: RISK MANAGEMENT		FUNCTION: LIABILITY INSURANCE			DEPT #: 945		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
EXPENSES	524,131	605,048	700,000	775,000	775,000	-	
<b>TOTAL RISK MANAGEMENT :</b>	<b>\$524,131</b>	<b>\$605,048</b>	<b>\$700,000</b>	<b>\$775,000</b>	<b>\$775,000</b>	<b>-</b>	

## ENTERPRISE FUNDS

### WATER ENTERPRISE

#### General Purpose/Mission:

Use the highest levels of science, innovation, conservation and customer service to safely deliver, and bill accordingly over one billion gallons of potable water to the residents, businesses and industries of Franklin.

#### Objectives:

- Wells/water facilities (23 sites) – Maintain chemical levels to State & Federal standards, daily pumping records, daily water testing, weekly water sampling and testing by certified lab, and monthly records reported to MassDEP. Maintain pumps, electric motors, telemetry, chemical feed systems, standby power supplies, buildings, security fencing, roadways and grounds.
- Water meters (~10,000 accounts) – All residential, commercial and industrial water meters read quarterly. Maintain meters, water meter calibration, water meter replacement program, final read inspections for homes over 20 years old, records for water meter installation, meter history and maintenance cards.
- Cross-Connection Control Program – Operate and maintain a cross-connection control program that oversees the testing and inspection of over 700 backflow protection devices.
- Water Distribution System Maintenance – Maintain and repair all of the Town's water mains, water service lines to and including the curb stop valves, and public hydrants. Perform hydrant flushing, valve exercising and annual leak detection to provide the Town with adequate flows and pressures for fire protection and domestic uses. Keep unaccountable water at a low percentage.
- Support Supplies & Equipment – Ensure the department has trucks, equipment, and a proper inventory of supplies for day-to-day operations and emergencies after hours.
- This department provides both technical and physical assistance to internal and external customers for public and private projects including plan review and permitting, and provides excellent customer service.

#### Selected FY24 & Beyond Challenges/Strategic Initiatives:

- The continued planning and implementation of the Water Capital Improvement Plan, specifically water main reconstruction. With the help of ARPA funding the Town was able to construct year 3 and 4 in 2022. Year 5 is being constructed in spring/summer 2023.
- Increased Mass DEP and EPA regulatory activities; particularly as they affect municipal water, PFAS, iron and manganese levels, lead and copper testing, water service line inventory and water management act conservation requirements.
- Lead in organizing municipalities to coordinate involvement in response to unwarranted and detrimental DEP policy making.

## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 (FY24) BUDGET

- Continue to secure water for the Town's future, by restoring capacity in existing wells (treatment plant, well redevelopment, water treatment etc.).
- Continue to promote and grow on the work the Town has done with "Water Smart" development regulations aimed at minimizing water use (especially peak) and maximizing localized recharge of storm water.
- Continue to foster a "water conservation" attitude and understanding throughout Town through education, outreach and enforcement.
- Continue with a strong "leak detection" plan to limit the amount of lost water throughout the Town.
- Continued meter replacement plan for accurate water billing.

### Significant Adjustments:

- The FY24 budget was prepared as a "level service budget" to continue with residents' expected services, except for efficiency improvements, increases in utility and material costs and proposed service improvements that are noted below.
- The FY24 budget does reflect step raises and other contractual requirements for union employees.

### Major Concerns:

In 2020 Well 7/7A had detections of four of six regulated PFAS. From December 2020 to January 2022, sampling results showed an overall increase in PFAs, with an exceedance of the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) occurring in December 2021. Through the Town's Capital Budget, money has been allocated for the Piloting & Design of a new PFAS treatment facility adjacent to the current building at the Well No. 7/7A site. Use of a Granulated Activated Carbon (GAC) treatment system, a well-proven technology, is anticipated and will be tested/confirmed through the performance of a PFAS bench scale pre-design evaluation. The Town is also on the draft Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) intended use plan to obtain low interest loans and principal forgiveness on the estimated \$5.6 Million project.

The Fisher Street Water Treatment Plant (WTP) is going to require a replacement of the obsolete Koch membrane equipment in use at the plant and replacement of the overall membrane system is expected to represent appreciable cost in 2024-2025. The Town reviewed its future options, namely a replacement zone/membrane-based system versus installation of a non-membrane treatment system featuring a pressurized media filtration system such as greensand filtration, similar to the Grove Street WTP. To improve the system reliability, WTP safety of operations, reduce energy usage and provide operational consistency, the Town chose to proceed with the pressurized media filtration system option. Again, through the Town's Capital Budget, money has been allocated for Phase 1 of the Piloting & Design for the upgrade. Additional capital budget funds will be needed in FY24 to finish the design under Phase 2 and then ultimately funds will need to be appropriated for the estimated \$14.0 million needed for construction.

The Town currently utilizes two existing, riveted steel tanks at the Hillside distribution storage facility, Hillside Tank No. 1 was originally constructed in 1888 and Hillside Tank No. 2 in 1928. The Town elected to pursue replacement of the two existing riveted steel tanks with one new welded steel tank with combined capacity of

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1.7 million gallons. The new tank will be equipped with a mixing system. The design of the project will be finalized in 2023, with the construction depending on availability of funding (estimated at \$7.8 million).

The Town will be continuing with the replacement of aging equipment and SCADA controls with current technology to prevent interruptions to water service. However, availability of materials, products and parts has been hampered by the current supply chain challenges. In addition the volatility in product costs, utility costs, and overall inflation is limiting how far the Town’s funding can go.

DEPARTMENT: WATER		FUNCTION: WATER			DEPT #: 450		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	1,126,224	1,196,811	1,479,850	1,694,900	1,694,900	-	
EXPENSES	1,463,144	1,775,254	2,306,000	2,446,045	2,446,045	-	
DEBT PRINCIPAL	1,494,325	2,146,054	2,070,065	2,107,204	2,107,204	-	
DEBT INTEREST	447,037	570,631	604,367	558,233	558,233	-	
<b>TOTAL WATER BUDGET :</b>	<b>\$4,530,730</b>	<b>\$5,688,750</b>	<b>\$6,460,282</b>	<b>\$6,806,382</b>	<b>\$6,806,382</b>	-	

**SEWER ENTERPRISE**

General Purpose/Mission:

Use the highest levels of science, innovation, and customer service to safely deliver and bill over one billion gallons of wastewater to the Charles River Pollution Control Treatment Plant in Medway.

Objectives:

- Sewer pump stations (23 sites) – Record daily pumping records, monitor daily operations, wash down, sanitize and maintain flows to CRCPD. Maintain pumps, electric motors, telemetry, standby power supplies, building security fencing, driveways & grounds.
- Sewer Collection System Maintenance – Maintain and repair the Town’s entire sewer infrastructure including sewer mains, manholes, hydraulic cleaning, TV investigation and clearing of easements.
- Emergency twenty-four hour, seven days a week response/customer service.
- Support Supplies & Equipment – Ensure the department has trucks, equipment, and a proper inventory of supplies for day-to-day operations and emergencies after hours.
- This department provides both technical and physical assistance to internal and external customers for public and private projects including plan review and permitting providing excellent customer service.

Selected FY24 & Beyond Challenges/Strategic Initiatives:

- The biggest challenge will be the construction of the Beaver Street Interceptor Repair and Replacement project. The 110-year old Beaver Street Interceptor conveys over 70% of the Town's raw sewage to the Charles River Pollution Control District. The location of the pipe is a major challenge to the construction as it goes through wetlands, the MBTA tracks, Franklin Village Mall and Route 140. The Town Council authorized \$33 million borrowing for the project and the construction of the project is approved for Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) low interest loans and principal forgiveness due to the Federal Infrastructure Bill. FY24 will see the start of construction with the hope of as little disruption to the Town as possible. This will be one of the Town's largest construction projects ever outside of a new school, but is critical to the health, safety, and prosperity of the community.
- Increased Mass DEP and EPA regulatory activities of delivery and operations of wastewater operations.
- Continue sewer improvements designed to reduce Inflow and Infiltration.
- Continue to meter and model to evaluate the impact of these improvements, and to identify the need for further sewer work.
- Continue to work with developers to reduce flow during peak demand periods.
- Work with Charles River Pollution Control District on proposed Inflow and Infiltration work to the District owned interceptors and plan for future improvements to the District owned Treatment Facility.

Significant Adjustments:

- The FY24 budget was prepared as a "level service budget" to continue with residents' expected services, except for efficiency improvements, increases in utility and material costs and proposed service improvements that are noted below.
- The FY24 budget does reflect step raises and other contractual requirements for union employees.
- Charles River Pollution Control District assessments are based on information provided by them. Number is subject to change.

Major Concerns:

The Town will be continuing with replacement of aging pumps, motors, drives, and SCADA controls with current technology to prevent interruptions to sewer service. In addition, the Town will be continuing its investment in Infiltration and Inflow removal from the sewer system, while repairing the structural integrity of older pipes in the system. However, availability of materials, products and parts has been hampered by the

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current supply chain challenges. In addition the volatility in product costs, utility costs, and overall inflation is limiting how far the Town’s funding can go.

DEPARTMENT: SEWER		FUNCTION: SEWER			DEPT #: 450		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	672,093	668,734	802,798	935,104	935,104	-	
EXPENSES	3,533,972	3,432,993	3,828,510	3,995,550	3,995,550	-	
DEBT PRINCIPAL	277,000	321,700	288,000	768,703	768,703	-	
DEBT INTEREST	53,990	86,762	85,010	315,470	315,470	-	
<b>TOTAL SEWER BUDGET :</b>	<b>\$4,537,055</b>	<b>\$4,510,189</b>	<b>\$5,004,318</b>	<b>\$6,014,827</b>	<b>\$6,014,827</b>	<b>-</b>	

**SOLID WASTE ENTERPRISE**

General Purpose/Mission:

To provide the highest level of customer service for curbside pickup of trash, recyclables and yard waste from 9,650 households for transportation to the Millbury WIN Incinerator, the recycling processing center, and composting centers.

Objectives:

- To continue with a high level of customer service and response times.
- Work to increase the Town’s recycling rate, while decreasing the amount of trash tonnage delivered to the Millbury Wheelabrator Incinerator.
- Work with the Town Council to establish enforcement criteria for improved recycling tonnage.
- Manage single stream and solid waste pick-up contracts.
- Implement the DEP funding grant for recycling monitoring and public education.

Major Concern:

The continued volatility of the global recycling market and its effect on our operational costs.

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DEPARTMENT: SOLID WASTE		FUNCTION: SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL			DEPT #: 434		
Classification	FY 2021 Expended	FY 2022 Expended	FY 2023 Budget	FY 2024 Budget Levels			
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final	
PERSONAL SERVICES	83,915	83,940	99,954	132,806	132,806	-	
EXPENSES	2,275,160	2,133,369	2,467,000	2,682,833	2,682,833	-	
<b>TOTAL SOLID WASTE BUDGET :</b>	<b>\$2,359,074</b>	<b>\$2,217,308</b>	<b>\$2,566,954</b>	<b>\$2,815,639</b>	<b>\$2,815,639</b>	-	

### STORMWATER ENTERPRISE

General Purpose/Mission:

Use the highest levels of science, innovation, conservation, and customer service to collect and monitor stormwater, maintain stormwater infrastructure, educate the public, and treat stormwater as required by State and Federal permits.

All information on stormwater can be found on the Town website:

General Website: <https://www.franklinma.gov/stormwater-division>

Flier: [Stormwater Flyer and Summary](#)

How much do I have to Pay? [Stormwater and Impervious Area Story Map](#)

Objectives:

- To comply with the [EPA federally-mandated MS4 Permit](#).
- Catch Basins (5,700+) - continue to monitor and clean catch basins to maintain a level of <50% full
- Drain pipe (128 miles) - continue to monitor, maintain and repair all drain pipes to ensure proper passage of stormwater and prevent localized flooding
- Outfalls (502) - continue to monitor, maintain and repair all outfalls to prevent flooding and identify and remove possible illicit discharges
- Catchments (499) - continue to monitor and investigate stormwater catchments to ensure appropriate functionality of the drainage system and prevent illicit discharges into the MS4.
- BMPs (307) - continue to monitor and maintain all stormwater best management practices, including rain gardens, detention, retention and infiltration basins, tree wells, stormceptors and other subsurface drainage structures. Franklin's BMPs play a critical role in removing pollutants from stormwater and encouraging infiltration, making their maintenance and continued functionality crucial to the success of the drainage system
- Public Education - continue to educate and engage with the public on stormwater pollutants, stormwater treatment and how residents can keep Franklin's stormwater clean and free from debris.
- Support Supplies & Equipment - ensure the future department has trucks, equipment, and a proper inventory of supplies for day-to-day operations and emergencies after hours.

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**Selected FY24 & Beyond Challenges/Strategic Initiatives:**

- Increased MassDEP and EPA regulatory activities and how they may impact the current MS4 permit.
- The continued planning and implementation of the Phosphorus Control Plan (PCP), specifically BMP retrofits and new construction to meet our phosphorus reduction goals.
- Continue to lead in organizing municipalities to coordinate efforts to meet regulations. compliance is possible cost saving measures.
- Continue to foster a “keep stormwater clean” attitude and understanding throughout Town with education, outreach and enforcement.
- Continue to perform public outreach regarding stormwater education and build upon past initiatives of story map and mailer information.
- Continue impervious area feature class updates to ensure accurate stormwater billing.

**Major Concerns:**

As weather patterns continue to change, additional stresses will be placed upon the drainage system and its ability to function. Therefore, the Stormwater Division must be creative in managing future stormwater threats to Franklin. Through grant funding and collaboration with local non-profit groups, the Stormwater Division will continue to keep up-to-date on the latest innovation solutions and green infrastructure options to maintain and improve the drainage infrastructure.

<b>DEPARTMENT: STORMWATER</b>	<b>FUNCTION: STORMWATER</b>			<b>DEPT #: 460</b>		
Classification	FY Expended	FY Expended	FY Budget	FY24 Budget Levels		
				Department Request	Town Admin Recommend	Town Council Final
PERSONAL SERVICES	-	-	-	334,117	334,117	-
EXPENSES	-	-	-	700,000	700,000	-
<b>TOTAL STORMWATER BUDGET :</b>				<b>1,034,117</b>	<b>1,034,117</b>	

## SECTION 3: APPENDICES

### **APPENDIX A**

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR RECOMMENDED  
VOTING DOCUMENT & BUDGET BOOK

[Town Administrator Recommended Budget Voting Document & Budget Book](#)  
[\(per Town Charter prevision 6-5-1 and 6-5-2\)](#)

### **APPENDIX B**

[FRANKLIN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET](#)

[The Superintendent's Recommended FY24 Budget Executive Summary & Powerpoint Presentation](#)

### **APPENDIX C**

LOCAL HISTORICAL DATA

[Appendix C1 Budget Breakdown](#)

[Appendix C2 Operating Revenue](#)

[Appendix C3 Fixed Cost](#)

[Appendix C4 Local Aid](#)

[Appendix C5 Local Receipts](#)

[Appendix C6 Assessments](#)

[Appendix C7 New Growth](#)

[Appendix C8 Free Cash Balances](#)

[Appendix C9 FC & RE](#)